

What Price Imperialism?



Salvadoran Soldier:
Stuart Zatin

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El Salvador
policy may
cost him.**

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THE INSIDE STORY



Lodz Solidarity leader Zbigniew Kowalewski (right)

Polish crackdown convulses CGT

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

Events in Poland have provided an occasion to size up Communist Party (PCF) influence in the French labor movement and its political implications. The refusal of the Communist leadership of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) to call for release of Solidarity people arrested after the Dec. 13 imposition of martial law set off the largest rank-and-file revolt in the organization's recent history. Yet CGT leaders appeared to jump at the chance to remind the Socialists that it would be futile to try to challenge PCF control of France's largest labor grouping.

Faced with the Socialist electoral victory last May, the PCF and CGT quickly stopped attacking the Socialists in order to get Communists into four of the 43 cabinet posts in the new government. But in typical Stalinist style, the switch to a unitary position was achieved by favoring such a position all along. Thus the ability to switch back again rapidly was preserved.

The expulsion of Eurocommunists such as former Paris federation secretary Henri Fiszbin has demoralized many party militants, while the loss of National Assembly seats and deficit of its unread press have hurt the party's finances. The PCF is more determined than ever to keep a tight grip on its main power base, the CGT. The CGT should be better able than the PCF to withstand the disaffection undermining both organizations because as the oldest and most militant labor confederation in France it commands loyalties among a whole range of political sensibilities.

Since World War II, the PCF has dominated the elected national bodies, generally managing to confine more revolutionary currents (anarchist or Trotskyist) to the lower rungs of the organization, while sharing the 12-person national bureau with a respectable selection of Socialists, Christians and independents.

Polish-born Henri Krasucki, whose Jewish Communist parents immigrated to Paris before World War II to get away from an anti-semitic military dictatorship, is expected to succeed Georges Seguy as secretary general at the CGT's 41st congress next June and is already the boss. Hard-working, wily and witty, Krasucki's delicate task is to trade critical support for the Socialist-dominated government for maximum institutional benefits for his organization, while tightening PCF control.

After the Dec. 13 Polish coup, virtually every labor and left organization in Western Europe backed four basic demands: an immediate end to martial law in Poland, immediate release of trade unionists, restoration of union rights won since August 1980 and

resumption of dialogue between social forces in Poland. The CGT's rival, the French Democratic Labor Confederation (CFDT), called demonstrations for these demands attended by individual CGT members. But the CGT bureau, in a statement issued Dec. 18, took the PCF line that the fuss over Poland risked plunging Poland into catastrophe and the world into war, and was being stirred by the right in order to split the left and block social and economic reforms in France.

As for the first contention, the PCF failed to supply convincing arguments showing how verbal protest could have such dire results (instead simply repeating it over and over in the familiar "we know more than we can responsibly reveal" tone). As for the second, Socialist Party (PS) leader Lionel Jospin had no trouble retorting that it was a self-fulfilling prophecy. If the PCF was so concerned about left unity and reforms in France, why didn't it respond to overwhelming popular sympathy for Poland, as the Socialist Party was in fact forced to do by public opinion?

One current explanation in the CGT is that the French Communists are still hoping to influence political developments in Poland by throwing their weight behind moderate reformists in Eastern Europe.

Ten days later, in the pages of the PCF daily *l'Humanite*, Krasucki delivered a more-or-less veiled warning to the PS not to encourage or try to exploit the dissent over Poland within the CGT. Under the heading, "Knowing What One Wants," Krasucki reminded Socialist leaders that the CGT is the largest social force supporting its reform program and must be accepted as is. CGT Socialist Pierre Feuilly noted, "Rather than accept debate with the hundreds of locals scandalized by his positions, Krasucki prefers to settle the matter bureaucratically with the party in power." Unabashed, Krasucki told an executive commission meeting a couple of days later that what really set off his warning was the government's dawdling over its promises to reform elections to management of the Social Security health insurance system in a way that would give CGT primary control over that vast enterprise—in tandem with the Communist Minister of Public Health Jack Ralite.

This is driving home to the Socialists the unpleasant lesson that for all their electoral success they still have no solid base in organized labor. The CFDT is not at all related to the PS as the CGT is related to the PCF; the CFDT's leadership has historic connections to the Rocardian faction of the PS, which makes it suspect to the others, while its base tends to go every which way, making it even more suspect. CFDT leaders were ecstatic over the election of the Socialist government, which has drawn some of them into its councils; yet the CFDT score has dropped in factory elections held since the Socialists took over, while the CGT has done slightly better (although membership in both confederations is stagnating if not actually declining)...at least, until Poland.

"Can the role of unions in economic and social life be significantly increased without the risk of building up the CGT into a veritable political counter-power?" asked Pierre Rosanvallon, the CFDT's former theorist of *autogestion*, or "self-management" socialism, in a recent article. Given the present relationship of forces, worker control in many key industries would mean CGT control, therefore meaning PCF control, which is the generally unacknowledged reason French Socialists, and even the CFDT, have practically stopped talking about *autogestion*—except in regard to Poland, where what it may mean, no one knows.

The Polish events were the closest thing to *autogestion* that has been seen recently. While the CFDT officially and unanimously took up the cause of solidarity with *Solidarnosc*, the movement was even more poli-

tically exciting within the CGT itself because it opposed the official position. All over France collectives of CGT militants were formed to "save the honor of the CGT" by expressing solidarity with Polish workers. They raised funds for Solidarity and circulated petitions with three demands: end of martial law, release of unionists and restoration of union rights. They also insisted the CGT keep open its invitation to Solidarity to attend the 41st Congress next June.

By Jan. 6, the petition had been endorsed by six national Federations, 22 National Unions, 16 departmental unions and 370 company locals. On Jan. 12, a crowd of over 2,000 packed the Paris Bourse du Travail for a rousing meeting of CGT solidarity with Poland featuring Lodz Solidarity leader Zbigniew Kowalewski.

While the rank-and-file dissent over Poland was widespread and did not necessarily imply any other disagreement with CGT leadership, it was organized and coordinated by militants with definite, if differing, political orientations—militants who want to use the Polish issue to raise the question of union democracy at the June congress, accusing the leadership of betraying the CGT pledge to defend union rights all over the world.

While Socialists (relatively few) and Trotskyists were among the organizers, the movement most clearly bore the mark of the pre-Bolshevik communist strain of the French labor movement, or the anarchist or libertarian strain. Its coordinating committee was housed by the Paris Correctors Union, the haven of generations of working class intellectuals who, to pay the rent, proof-read between bouts of revolutionary activism. The first national Federation to get involved was the Merchant Marine, notorious for its incorrigible anarchist tendencies. Its secretary, Raymond Charpiot, speaking at the Jan. 12 meeting, criticized the CGT leadership for assuming the right to defend "not the socialization of the means of production, but the version of socialism issuing from the 1917 Bolshevik revolution." The stress on "socialization," rather than state control, of the means of production is a reminder of the anarchist origins of the CGT and is a call for an examination of what the CGT means today by socialism.

Kowalewski was just the right Pole for that meeting. Representing the radical wing of Solidarity, he sounded as if he belonged to the same political family as Charpiot and the Correctors. Kowalewski said Solidarity was not counter-revolutionary. "Who is counter-revolutionary?" he asked, "a little group of bureaucrats clinging to their privileges, sending soldiers against workers to defend their dictatorship, or Solidarity, which fought for socialization of the means of production, for *autogestion* in the factories?"

For all its importance, the movement can hardly hope to build an effective challenge to Krasucki's leadership in time for the CGT congress next June. Krasucki is already at work splitting the members "with a sincere difference of opinion on the Polish question" from "systematic oppositionists trying to spread factionalism." Not only is factionalism condemned by CGT statutes, but it also arouses distrust and rejection in the rank and file. Krasucki's warning to Socialist leaders not to stir up dissent in the CGT is also a reminder that the militants leading the protest over Poland are in large part the same revolutionaries who are likely to criticize the government's slow pace in carrying through measures (starting with the 35-hour week) management doesn't like. Led by the PCF, the CGT is the government's irreplaceable partner in keeping the social peace. It could be the peace of the graveyard of democratic socialism.

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Congress talks back on El Salvador

By William Buzenberg

WASHINGTON

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION's policy for El Salvador, characterized by Secretary of State Alexander Haig as "we'll do whatever is necessary," has just suffered through its worst week in Congress, if not the country at large.

In the weeks and months ahead, when officials encounter increasing trouble selling that Salvadoran policy, the denouement will be traced to this period—the time when a recognizable credibility gap started to form. The week began with a presidential certification to Congress that the government of El Salvador was making "progress" in several areas. The certification, which was required for continued U.S. aid, was followed earlier this month by a series of hearings in both the Senate and House, where administration officials were asked to justify their certification.

On the surface, the week ended with the administration seemingly getting what it wanted. It got the go-ahead for \$65 million of economic and military aid to El Salvador, which the Congress had previously approved, and it got tacit approval for sending an additional \$55 million in emergency military aid, which Congress couldn't block.

But underneath this success in tripling the level of U.S. assistance, the administration has paid a price in believability. And the initial reaction in Congress suggests this is something that will haunt administration foreign policy for the rest of this term, barring any upswing in candor. The cost to the Reagan foreign policy team is due to an unlucky convergence of two things: events in El Salvador and that certification deadline of Jan. 28 set by Congress.

What happened in the village of Mozote, in Morazan province, took place on Dec. 11. But it wasn't reported in the American press until Jan. 27 when the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* broke the story about a massacre of 700 to 1,000 civilians by Salvadoran army troops. The same day 100 guerrillas attacked Ilopango airport, the main military airbase, and destroyed or damaged six French-built bombers, six transport helicopters and five transport planes.

Last week in Washington demonstrators carried placards comparing the Morazan massacre to My Lai since the Salvadoran troops allegedly involved had been trained by the U.S. The Ilopango was compared to the successful Viet Cong assault at Pleiku. But as disturbing as these internal Salvadoran events were to the administration, they were aggravated by the fact that they occurred the day before certification.

The deadline could not have come at a worse time. But it was not just bad timing that upset Congress. Both sides of the aisle were bothered by what the administration claimed was happening in El Salvador. Here's what President Reagan signed his name to and sent to Congress, along with a seven-page justification. The documents said:

- The Salvadoran government is making a concerted effort to comply with internationally recognized human rights. Accurate information is not available, the administration said, but the level of non-combat violence has "declined by more than half over the last year."

- It is achieving substantial control over all elements of its own armed forces, so as to bring an end to indiscriminate torture and murder of Salvadoran citizens. Again, officials reported the "trend is downward," and more than 1,000 soldiers have been punished for various abuses.

- The Salvadoran government is committed to holding free elections at an



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conclusions."**

At the certification hearings, members of Congress pointed out that there were more killings by security forces in 1981 than in previous years combined.

early date and to that end has demonstrated its good faith efforts to begin discussions with all major factions in El Salvador. Eight political parties are participating in next months elections, which officials say are supported by the Salvadoran Counsel of Bishops.

- It continues to make progress toward implementing essential economic and political reforms, including the land-reform program. Progress has been substantial, officials said, with provisional land titles being issued at the rate of 4,000 per month.

- And it has made good faith efforts to investigate the murder of six U.S. citizens in El Salvador and bring to trial those who are responsible. The administration expects indictments in the murder case of four church women "maybe as early as this week."

After receiving this certification, several members of Congress pointed out that there were more killings by security forces in 1981—some 12,500—than in the previous years combined, according to the Salvadoran Archdiocese Legal Aid Office. They also said that the land reform program is on the verge of disaster because 25,000 *campesinos* have been evicted by government forces, according to the country's major peasant organization, the UCS (Union Comunal Salvadoreña). And they pointed out the despite the talk of progress, the Salvadoran government still has not indicted anyone for the murders 14 months ago of four church women and despite implications that higher authorities may have been involved, it has detained only six unnamed guardsmen.

The certification was "an obvious whitewash," in the words of Rep. Tom Harkin (D-Ia.), who introduced legislation to declare it null and void. Rep. Don Bonker (D-Wash.) called it an affront to Congress: "No reputable human rights organization in the world supports the state department's contention."

And not one Republican Senator or Representative defended the administration's certification during the two days of hearings.

Both houses had originally added the certification requirement to the Foreign Assistance Act—not to cut off aid, but to give the administration and the government of El Salvador leverage over what U.S. officials call the recalcitrant right and lawless elements in the security forces. But after receiving the certification, the feeling in Congress was that the administration had wasted that leverage.

"If you tell them their performance of the past couple of months and the past year is okay," said Rep. Gerry Studds (D-Mass.), "you've told them they can do virtually anything they choose to do, and the U.S. will continue to support them."

The depth of congressional displeasure of certification—the widespread sense that they were being lied to—didn't really emerge until the hearings began on Feb. 1. One reason is that the day before the hearings another incident involving Salvadoran army troops was widely reported by the media. This one occurred in a neighborhood near the capital of San Salvador. Army commanders said they killed 20 guerrillas in a fire fight. But witnesses said 19 people, including a 14-year-old boy and a 57-year-old woman, were dragged from their homes and killed in cold blood.

The timing of that raid only made it more difficult for Thomas Enders, the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, when he went before House and Senate subcommittees. The human rights situation in El Salvador, he said, "is deeply troubled, but the certifi-

Continued on page 10

IN SHORT

Rein on terror

Diana Johnstone has passed along a clandestine tract issued Jan. 4 by the Malopolska regional leadership of Poland's Solidarity union. Johnstone calls the text, which follows, a model summary of arguments against terrorist temptations.

"The media are already claiming that Solidarity had trained terrorist groups to fight the government. Here is a new and dangerous propaganda note, which flows logically from the fairy tale about 'the bloody putsch being prepared by Solidarity.'

"The Malopolska regional leadership warns trade unionists, young people and all men of good will against the danger of terrorist attacks provoked by the Security Police. Watch out for persons who suggest such ideas and make their names known.

"Terrorism was invented by the Czarist secret police in the 19th century. In a totalitarian state, it can only serve to reinforce the military police state. Moreover, terrorism helps discredit opposition in the eyes of public opinion and supplies a justification for repression. Strengthened by a terrorism it organized itself, the government could seal the fate of Solidarity militants.

"The Malopolska regional leadership condemns terrorism as a harmful and ineffective form of action, incompatible with Christian ethics and with Solidarity's program and principles. Anyone who undertakes terrorist actions automatically ends his membership in Solidarity.

"The urgency of the problem prevents us from taking time to seek to work out a common platform with other regions, but we feel sure our judgment is that of the whole union, as it flows from the Solidarity program. We will not win by opposing evil with evil, but with goodness."

Dawn of the dumb

Dave Lindorff reports that the latest figures show "virtually" no improvement in the so-called basics among graduating high school students in New Jersey, despite efforts in that state to focus education on the Three Rs. But at the same time, reports from another quarter—the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—suggest that students in New Jersey are learning about the wonders of free enterprise.

The Chamber, which has been pushing its education kit (titled "Economics for Young Americans") on public schools in the northern part of the state, claims that before taking its mini-course, 70 percent of the students thought government should set minimum wage levels "to assure a liveable income for workers." Afterwards, 73 percent thought minimum wages should be eliminated. Before, a slight plurality (47.2 percent to 45.8 percent) thought automation meant fewer jobs; after, 91.5 percent disagreed with that statement.

The Chamber reports that about 90 percent of secondary schools in the U.S. have been "exposed" to "Economics for Young Americans."

From the war-horse's mouth

The Reagan administration, reports Gar Smith, has proposed a \$10 billion, five-year civil defense strategy calling for the evacuation from America's cities to distant "host areas" in times of "growing international tension." In the event of nuclear attack, according to government statements, this program of "Crisis Relocation Planning" will save 80 percent of the population.

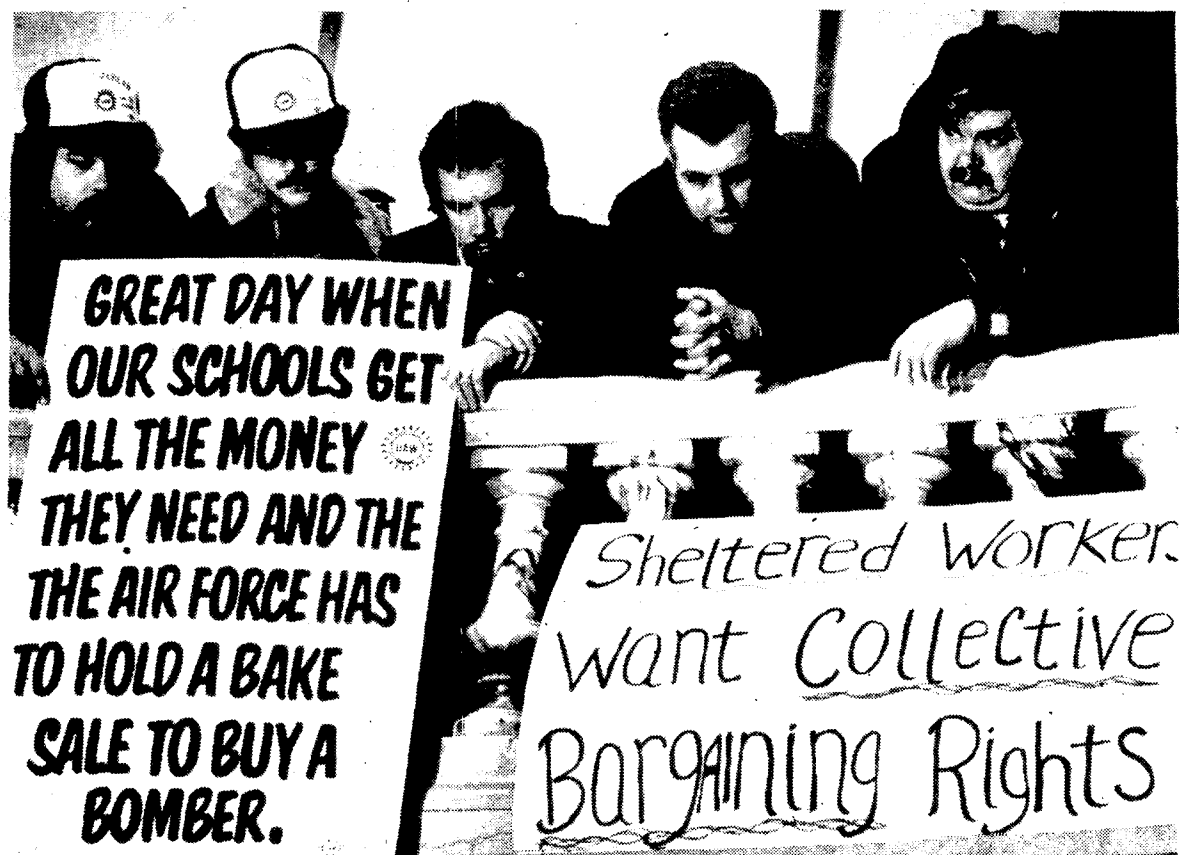
But that figure is disputed, says Smith, in a little-known study published in 1976 by the Defense Civil Preparedness Agency (DCPA), a predecessor of the current Federal Emergency Management Agency. The report, *The Nuclear Crisis of 1979* by William M. Brown, was intended for circulation to officials responsible for "nuclear civil protection." Contradicting the Reagan administration's later promises of a high survival rate following a nuclear war, the 1979 document predicted 120 million casualties—with Crisis Relocation. Of those 100 million "saved" by evacuation, one in four would be slowly dying from radiation-induced diseases. Only 78 million Americans—roughly 34 percent—could be called "survivors."

The report also foresaw the post-attack collapse of both federal and state government. Isolated surviving communities would be left to "hope for the best." Among those expected to remain, and die, in the nation's cities: millions of "derelict" citizens, including "winos and heroin addicts," "older Americans," "antiwar idealists," members of "minority communities" and rabid "pet lovers."

Caveat canine

Speaking of pets, loved and unloved, the government of the People's Republic has launched the Year of the Dog by drawing the line against dogism. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* (via PNS) reports that dogism, as defined by the Chinese, is a mania whose victims "refuse to eat dog meat, and just want to raise the dog for company. They set up special shops to meet the requirements of dogs. They even produce canned dog food and offer half-price airplane tickets for dogs." The warning concludes: "This is a product of a sick capitalist society and does not exist in China." Approached for his reaction, Bo, a big white dog who frequents *In These Times*' offices, had no comment.

—Josh Kornbluth



While Gov. Quie takes a long lunch break, protesters display signs of the times at the state capitol.

A rally at Minnesota's unemployment factory

ST. PAUL—While Minnesota's Republican governor Al Quie was out to lunch on Jan. 19, more than 2,000 unemployed workers, handicapped and senior citizens, trade union members and working women besieged the state capitol with demands for full employment. Quie never did return from lunch to hear the protesters denounce the governor's policies, which have turned the state's \$500 million surplus into an \$800 million deficit in three years.

Minnesota AFL-CIO president Dave Roe called the rally in response to rising state unemployment and threats by the governor's office to reduce workers' compensation and unemployment benefits, along with other essential services in Minnesota. (The official state unemployment rate was 8.9 percent in December. In the hard-hit Iron Range area of northern Minnesota, unemployment has been hovering around 25 percent since fall.)

Though agriculture has traditionally been the state's economic mainstay in hard times, farmers have been devastated by the recent crisis. Minnesota Farmer's Union president Cy Carpenter said farmers lost a billion dollars in revenues in 1980, and another billion last year. According to Bill Peterson, representative of the State Building Trades, unemployment in the construction industry has doubled from 6 percent to 12 percent during the past year. "A carpenter from Virginia [Minn.] told me that of the 425 members in his union local, only 12 are still working," he said.

Minnesota's black community has long felt the state's economic crisis. Minneapolis Urban League director Gleason Glover said, "Where is the governor of the state of Minnesota?" he asked. "Does he realize that 17 percent of the black people in Minnesota are unemployed, and 50 percent of black youth?"

Unemployed steelworkers came to the rally from the Iron Range by the busload, cheering when acknowledged by Roe,

then throwing gibes at Republican Senate minority leader Robert Ashback when he admitted unemployment and inflation were problems in Minnesota. "You're standing in the middle of the biggest unemployment factory in Minnesota—the state legislature," said Bob Killeen, sub-regional director of the United Auto Workers.

One union in the state has been actively organizing the unemployed. The Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers (ACTWU) Local 66 has been fighting the closing of a Minneapolis Munsingwear plant since August. More than 400 workers will be unemployed when the plant shuts down next month. (Munsingwear has shifted most of its textile production to the South or overseas.) Some of the workers have been refused job interviews because their past union affiliation targets them as potential troublemakers, according to ACTWU Twin Cities Joint Board spokesman Richard Metcalf. Local 66 has organized an Unemployed Council to help Munsingwear workers confront the economic, social and emotional problems of unemployment.

—Colleen Aho

Nickel follows business' beat

WASHINGTON—Ronald Reagan is expected to appoint a new U.S. ambassador to South Africa in the next few weeks, and odds are he will choose Herman Nickel, who has made a career of defending multinational companies against their critics. "It's not a big secret that he is going to be named," says Chuck Berk, staffer for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which votes on ambassadorial appointments.

Nickel spent 23 years as a writer for Time, Inc. He retired on Dec. 31 from his most recent post, as Washington editor of *Fortune* magazine.

Nickel's *Fortune* articles are monuments of right-wing, pro-corporate propaganda. In "The

Corporation Haters" (June 16, 1980), a typical example of his approach; he went after those who campaign against the marketing practices of infant formula manufacturers such as Nestle. He labeled the boycott of Nestle and the campaign to restrict industry marketing as "bizarre" and described the arguments of the protesters as "terrible distortions," "transparently silly" and "anti-corporate propaganda." For the seasoned *Fortune* editor, the issue of whether infant formula manufacturers should promote their product in the third world really was a simple one: "The benefits easily outweigh the risks."

Not content simply to ridicule their arguments, Nickel also decided to smear the boycotters themselves. For example, he branded employees of the New York-based Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) as "Marxists marching under the banner of Christ." The ICCR's efforts consist primarily of filing shareholder resolutions at the annual meetings of corporations.

Nickel's story delighted the infant formula industry. "The *Fortune* article...is the best opportunity we have had yet to put the record straight," says a Nestle internal memo from the company's international vice president to the company's chief executive officer, "and must be fully exploited" (Nestle's emphasis).

Nickel got into hot water for this article, not only because of his crude characterizations, but also because of conflict-of-interest questions (*In These Times*, Feb. 18, 1981).

For a sample of the attitude he might bring to his new job, if appointed, take Nickel's "The Case for Doing Business in South Africa," published in *Fortune* on June 19, 1980. "The vast majority of companies—after sober weighing of all risks and uncertainties—have chosen to stand their ground" and remain in South Africa, Nickel writes, claiming that these morally inspired corporations are contributing to "an evolutionary process" that "is at work" eroding apartheid.

Because of Nickel's positions on human rights and on foreign investments in South Africa, several organizations, including the Washington Office on Africa and the ICCR, are planning

Joan Peir

to oppose his nomination.

"The appointment of Nickel would be a reflection of a shift in U.S. policy toward an alliance with white supremacy in southern Africa," says ICCR director Tim Smith.

[An earlier version of this article appeared in Multinational Monitor.]

Matthew Rothschild

Best of deals, worst of deals

CHICAGO—The hundredth anniversary of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's birth fell just four days after Ronald Reagan proposed in his Jan. 26 State of the Union address to eliminate the federal government's support of a wide range of social programs. This plan, if approved by Congress, will knock out the cornerstone of FDR's New Deal—the idea that national problems must be dealt with on a national basis.

The irony of this situation was clear to most who participated in the nationwide observance of Roosevelt's birthday, including Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr., who declined to attend a White House ceremonial luncheon, ex-

plaining, "The Reagan administration is undoing steps that my father took 40 to 50 years ago."

In Chicago—where FDR first promised the American people "a new deal" at the 1932 Democratic convention—the Roosevelt administration's record on labor, conservation, civil rights, social security, foreign policy and the arts was reviewed at a centennial celebration—with most of the speakers noting the sharp contrast with present government policies.

FDR came in for some criticism too—for his inaction on civil rights and on the fate of European Jews living under Hitler, for his imprisonment of Japanese-Americans during World War II and for giving in to party conservatives who wanted Harry Truman as the Democratic vice presidential candidate in 1944 rather than William O. Douglas. But most of the several hundred people in attendance were there to commemorate Roosevelt's accomplishments and applauded heartily when author Studs Terkel said, "Let us be born-again New Dealers."

The country's shift away from the principles of the New Deal was apparent in the funding of the centennial observance. In 1974, the centennial of Herbert Hoover's birth, Congress appropriated \$7 million to mark the event. FDR's celebration got only \$200,000. —Jay Walljasper

Study: Reagan wrongs rights

WASHINGTON—The Reagan administration sees affirmative action as a counterproductive tangle of quotas and timetables. But a recent report from the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights claims that affirmative action is often the only way to combat years of entrenched "institutional discrimination" in job bias cases.

The report—"Affirmative Action in the 1980s: Dismantling the Process of Discrimination"—was something of a parting shot by former commission chairman Arthur S. Flemming. It argues that affirmative action has not resulted in the hiring of unqualified candidates or "preferential treatment" for women and minorities. The commission characterizes the administration's attack on affirmative action as "inconsistent with the principles of established civil rights law and policy."

As if to undermine these findings, William Bradford Reynolds, assistant attorney general for civil rights, says he hopes to prod the Supreme Court into reversing its ruling that it is legal to give minorities and women preference in hiring and promotion.

In a related action, Labor Secretary Raymond Donovan's Office of Federal Contract Compliance has exempted 75 percent of government contracts from affirmative action guidelines. This change affects 40 million workers in about 2,000 firms.

Ironically, the pressure to dismantle affirmative action is coming almost solely from the administration and Congress, not from the businesses directly affected by the regulations. —Jane Stone

Briefing: Chain reaction



News and notes on nuclear energy, nuclear weapons and the antinuclear movement.

With nuclear power plants already corroding, rusting, busting, leaking and otherwise acting unpredictable, the nuclear industry now has another headache. Last month the U.S. Court of Appeals overruled the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and radically expanded the scope of the agency's "environmental assessment" of Three Mile Island, in Middletown, Penn. In addition to analyzing the impact on the physical environment (birds, trees, air, rivers, fish, people, business), the NRC cannot restart the undamaged reactor at TMI—Unit 1—until it examines "the psychological health of neighboring residents and the well-being of the surrounding communities."

In 1980, the NRC found an unusually high level of psychological stress and anxiety among neighbors of TMI, and independent studies have shown increases in tranquilizer and alcohol use by Middletown residents. Still, the NRC contended that stress is not a health consideration under the Atomic Energy Act.

General Public Utilities, TMI's owners, may have a tough time convincing worried customers that everything is under control. New leaks in the steam generator tubes have been found—the same kind of tubes that burst at the Ginna plant near Rochester, causing the most serious accident since TMI itself. TMI control room operators, caught cheating on written exams, were retested in

December and flunked. In January, a surprise leak in a ventilation system released some radiation into the air. To improve its credibility (if not performance), GPU has entertained its service area for the past six months with slick radio ads praising TMI.

Seventeen towns around TMI have gone on record opposing the restart of Unit 1 until GPU meets various conditions, and the governor's Energy Council claims that a majority of Pennsylvanians favor coal over nuclear. Perhaps the latest in a series of electric rate increases, tied to cleaning up the accident, makes coal look better. But as a reward for patience and faith, the rates will go down if Unit 1 goes on line.

GPU must give out other rewards as well, however reluctantly: Almost everyone who lived or worked within 25 miles of TMI during and after the 1979 accident has been sent a "Three Mile Island Accident Request for Claim Form." A class action lawsuit against GPU was settled out of court with the establishment of a landmark \$20 million "Economic Loss Fund" to pay back personal and business expenses as a result of the accident.

Even if a nuclear power plant runs smoothly, it still creates at least one problem—several tons of radioactive waste. The most dangerous nuclear garbage has been stored right next to the reactors. This is because scientists haven't figured out where to keep it all for thousands of years and because several cities and towns don't allow the stuff to be trucked down their streets to a temporary storage facility.

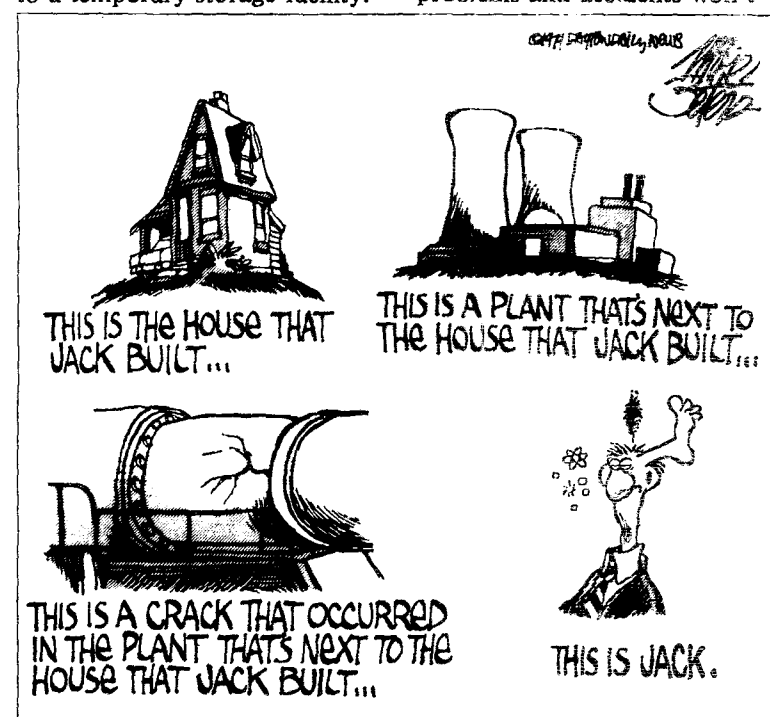
where such shipments have been banned by the Health Code since 1976, the nuclear waste from Long Island will come into midtown Manhattan and right past Bloomingdale's.

New York City, New York State, an upstate county and a Long Island town have asked a federal district court judge to block the shipments and invalidate the DOT decision. (A ruling in the case is expected this month.) In addition to New York City's ban on high-level nuclear waste, local ordinances in Illinois, Los Angeles county, New London, Conn., and Ohio are jeopardized.

The war at home: People living near three of the country's nine nuclear weapons factories suffer above-average cancer rates, and evidence suggests similar health effects around the other six weapons facilities and some nuclear power plants. Dr. Carl Johnson of the Department of Preventive Medicine at the University of Colorado (Denver) Medical School presented these findings to a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science last month.

He found an unusually high number of cancers and leukemias near the Savannah River plant operated by Du Pont in South Carolina, the famous Los Alamos lab in New Mexico and Rockwell International's bomb factory at Rocky Flats, Colo. "The excess cases of cancer" near Rocky Flats, Johnson wrote, "were due to more cases than expected of leukemia, lymphoma and myeloma and cancer of the lung, thyroid, breast, esophagus, stomach and colon, a pattern similar to that observed in the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki."

If health hazards, equipment problems and accidents won't



Rather than tackle the first problem, several utilities and a group of research labs complained to the U.S. Department of Transportation about "inconsistent" regulations on nuclear waste transport.

The DOT decided to clear up the messy local restrictions by wiping them away. Starting this month, high-level radioactive material could be allowed on any interstate highway (trucking is cheaper than shipping by barge). In New York City,

stop the nuclear industry, money will. For your scorecard: Since December, seven plants have been postponed indefinitely or cancelled, or permission to cancel has been requested, because their owners couldn't scrape up a mere two billion bucks.

—Susan Jaffe

Susan Jaffe also reports on nuclear issues for the Village Voice.



Alex Haig was happy at Chicago rally on Poland, less so at Washington hearings on El Salvador (see p. 3).

IN THE NATION

LABOR

Auto companies drive too hard a bargain with UAW

By David Moberg

NEARLY EVERY MAJOR INDUSTRIAL union now faces the vexing problem of how to defend workers' jobs in the midst of a recession as the industry undergoes profound changes in organization and technology. But the debate over strategy has rarely erupted as a serious internal political issue to the extent that it now has in the United Auto Workers (UAW).

UAW negotiators dropped early talks with General Motors (GM) after internal opposition made it clear that GM's limited job security offer would not overcome worker objections to economic concessions. But talks resumed at Ford, which unlike GM continued to

domestic plants, return work removed during the past year, protect against outsourcing new products and materials, and ensure that all GM work be done in plants that measure up to UAW standards in the future.

Although UAW vice president Owen Bieber described the tentative agreement in glowing terms to GM council delegates, most of the union's bargaining committee—representatives elected by delegates to various GM councils—were unhappy with it. The narrow vote in Washington to resume negotiations "had an impact on negotiations, a cloud on negotiations," President Douglas Fraser said. "Everything [GM] did, they wondered if it was ratifiable." Besides, without a strike threat, GM showed no sense of urgency to accommodate union demands, he said.

union debate and bargaining breakdown at GM, UAW Ford Division vice president Donald Ephlin said, "it will be more difficult for our committee to be supportive. They will be under greater pressure from outside forces."

Those "outside forces" are presumably the loosely linked network of several dozen Locals Opposed to Concessions (LOC) that was formed in Flint on Jan. 15. Although some longtime critics of the UAW leadership, such as Pete Kelly, Al Gardner and Bob Weissman, local leaders at GM, Ford and Chrysler respectively, provided much of the initiative, LOC took on new importance because of the breadth of local officials who either joined in or were swayed by its arguments. (Many were also swayed by fears that they would be blamed by members if concessions were granted.)

UAW leaders also face a growing rebellion among Canadian workers. Always independent, a bit nationalistic and fairly militant, many Canadian auto-workers had already been upset with Chrysler concessions and with their 16 percent monetary disadvantage that comes from being paid in devalued Canadian dollars. There is also restiveness among skilled trades workers, and once again the Independent Society of Skilled Trades is reported to be recruiting for a breakaway from the UAW.

LOC won't be tagged with the politically dangerous "dissident" label if Don Douglas, a LOC co-chair, has his way. He favors keeping the group active through negotiations in the fall, but does not envision it becoming an opposition caucus. Douglas said that he and other local leaders came under "heavy pressure" from international officers and staff, and they now "expect some reprisals." But he insists that LOC's resis-

demands without offering concessions as a trade-off. In addition, he suggested, the UAW could negotiate the plan that it recently introduced in Congress requiring all manufacturers to have specified percentages of U.S. labor content in cars sold here roughly in proportion to the level of sales. "If we can't get a local content law in Washington," Weissman said, "we'll have to get it in Detroit at the bargaining table."

One rank-and-file group organized by Mike Westfall, an 18-year veteran auto worker in Flint, Mich., has drummed up support for its CERP plan. The acronym stands for COLA for retirees, Earlier Retirement and more Paid Personal Holidays. A tax on increased productivity from robots and microelectronics would finance a CERP fund to pay for the benefits, which would increase employment by reducing work time. Westfall also proposes job guarantees for workers past a "safe seniority date" and contractual controls on outsourcing.

The current collective bargaining crisis affecting most industrial unions involves a combination of challenges that intensifies the difficulty posed by each. First, there's the recession, which intensifies the slump in demand and profits, the threats of bankruptcy and the "shake-out" of weaker firms. All of that leads to increased pressure on workers. Worldwide recession gives more of a life-and-death seriousness to competition, much of it from low-wage countries overseas or non-union companies in the U.S. Then there is a shift in the structure of the American economy, coupled with greater capital mobility and the portent of vast technological change. And a hard-nosed employer attack on gains labor had taken for granted is reinforced by the Reagan administration's tearing up the planks of the New Deal income floor.

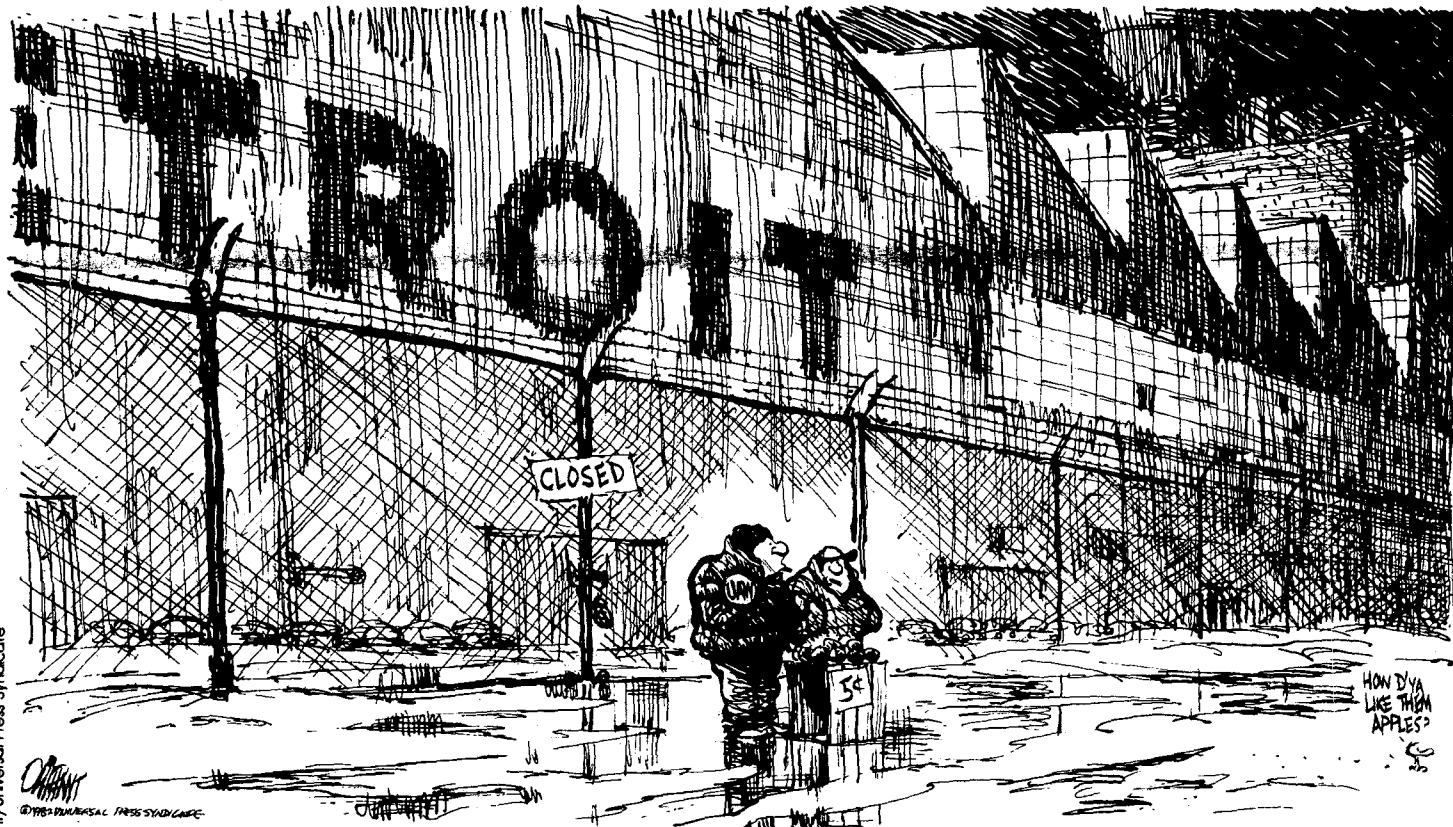
All of these changes are undermining collective bargaining trends of the past several decades. The UAW could always then be counted as a pattern-setter, helping to set labor prices that would help boost other workers' wages and benefits. Some observers fear that the UAW's acceptance of concessions could become a pattern-setter in reverse, making it harder for the Rubber Workers, who have decided to press hard in negotiations this spring despite recent concessions made to Uniroyal, or for the Steelworkers, whose contract comes up next year.

But Audrey Freeman, labor economist at the Conference Board, a business research institution, thinks that the UAW talks simply reflect the new era, when uniform wage standards and automatic protection against inflation will vanish. "What's really important is that the whole structure of bargaining will begin to fragment, and we will no longer have this inflexibility and wage imitation," she said. "Wage-setting practices are not going to copy auto or steel or rubber. I think those bargains will fragment in reality if not in description. These talks are dismantling the wage rigidities and patterning that reached their peak in the '70s. Union power has diminished. What we're seeing is a result of that diminished power. Wages will be driven down or the industries won't survive in this country."

Although there have always been exceptions even in the most solid of industry patterns, the idea behind such uniform bargaining is the elimination of labor as a competitive element. Companies would either respond to uniform wage increases by modernizing to increase efficiency or by passing through costs when lack of competition permitted. Hard times force labor back into competition, especially when it is easy to take advantage of cheap labor overseas or unorganized workers in the U.S. The end of "wage rigidities" means a return to the classic recession ploy, wage-cutting, either directly or through inflation.

The logic of bargaining leads unions either toward concessions or else toward greater involvement in the sacred prerogatives of managerial authority. Despite its acceptance of concessions, the UAW has raised alternatives that push in the opposite direction with varying degrees of effectiveness—bargaining over

Continued on page 10



post substantial losses last year. Ford's weak finances, widespread plant closings and extraction of local work rule concessions over the past year have already softened Ford worker resistance to the idea of givebacks, but union leaders admitted it would be hard to reach a settlement there nevertheless.

The UAW was ready at GM to give up for a special 18-month contract period all Paid Personal Holidays (originally negotiated to shorten work time and save jobs), a week's vacation pay, next year's traditional 3 percent productivity raise and part of the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).

In exchange GM would agree not to obtain more parts from overseas during the life of the contract and to give special hiring rights to laid-off workers with five years seniority. Savings on labor would have been passed on in lower car prices for the next nine months. When talks broke off, GM offered a less ambitious rebate plan anyway.

The UAW found GM's offer on "equality of sacrifice" from management and controls on outsourcing unacceptable. Originally the union wanted to prohibit "outsourcing" of current products from any foreign or non-union

Although reportedly not as ruthless in its demands as GM had been, Ford's proposal calls for massive concessions by union members: a wage freeze, no COLA for 18 months, no paid personal holidays, a week's less vacation and fewer holidays, reduced holiday pay, cuts in benefits and more worker co-payments, and a drastic plan to hire new workers—whenever that might start—at roughly \$3.50 an hour below standard rates, which would only be attained after five years on the job.

Ford offered not to close any more plants for one year except as a result of production cutbacks. Laid-off workers, including those who lost jobs during the last three years, would get preferential hiring rights. But the centerpiece of the offer was a new income security plan to go along with a modestly improved supplementary unemployment benefit program: any laid-off worker with 15 or more years of seniority would get at least 50 percent of his last day's pay until age 62 or retirement. Money from other income support or a new job would be deducted. But Ford refused to pass through its savings directly to consumers, as GM said it would.

With everybody well aware of the

tance "gave democracy a little face-lift. But they [international officials] should have provided opportunities for local input. Instead they said, 'This is what's good for you, and here's what you do.'"

"There's been an awful shadow of doubt cast on this whole operation," Douglas said. "People will be looking a lot deeper into guys like Bieber and Ephlin. Ordinarily Fraser would just pick his successor. I think there will be more questions raised at the next convention."

Some questions will undoubtedly come up at spring bargaining conventions, where there may be a hot debate over the administration caucus proposal that officers' terms be extended 18 months beyond the June 1983 convention in the event of a bargaining crisis. Fraser would thus continue past the mandated retirement age, and the anticipated internal battles for succession would be postponed.

LOC will also be challenged to come up with its own proposals, now that it has succeeded in hampering the leadership strategy. Weissman told a LOC meeting that, contrary to the union leaders' argument, he thought the corporations, anxious to recover with their 1983 models, will be vulnerable this fall. The union could press its job security

FINANCE

IRAs, the unfairest pension plan of all

By Thomas Brom

SAN FRANCISCO

YOU CAN TELL IT'S NOT MUCH of a retirement party by the snatches of hushed conversation audible over the tinkling glasses. "A gold watch—big deal," one office worker snorts. Social Security? "You can't live on that." And the chances of being covered by the company pension plan? "You've got to be kidding," someone else says.

With radio ads like this one, Home Savings and Loan is introducing its individual retirement accounts, or IRAs—and is stabbing at the heart of American workers. The cynical tone of the ads cuts through the usual pension plan assurances to expose the sinking feeling most of us share: We will be screwed by the system in our old age. And while the campaign may be ruthless, it brilliantly conveys the message of the Reagan administration—you're on your own, so better take care of Number One while you still can.

Individual retirement accounts have existed for years, but only with the Reagan-sponsored Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 have they offered much in tax shelter benefits. They are now available to virtually everyone and permit up to \$2,000 per year in tax-free investments.

"IRAs were part of the 'Christmas tree' tacked onto the Reagan tax bill," says Dean Tibbs, director of Citizens for Tax Justice in Washington. "It was mostly a symbolic gesture to promote personal savings. The financial institutions loved it."

What began as a throwaway to the banks and S&Ls, however, has taken on a life of its own. People have been assaulted with advice about how to become a millionaire through the miracle of compound interest. Some savings and loans are offering introductory interest rates as high as 50 percent for the first three months. Bank of America is currently offering a \$50,000 sweepstakes, including a Mexican cruise and \$1500 in traveler's checks, to anyone inquiring about IRAs. Brokerage houses, insurance funds and credit unions have also entered the fray, fighting for a share of new savings that could reach \$80 billion per year.

Media hype so far has been matched by a remarkable response from the public. Merrill Lynch and Co. in New York announced that it opened 13,000 accounts on Jan. 4, the first business day after the new tax law took effect. Crocker National Bank in San Francisco reports opening 400 to 700 IRA accounts a day. Chris Pierce of the California Savings and Loan League in Los Angeles says that the seven largest S&Ls in the state opened 28,000 accounts in the first nine business days of the year, amounting to \$60 million.

"We are enormously satisfied with the campaign," says Don Underwood, Merrill Lynch vice president in charge of IRAs. Syndicated financial columnist Sylvia Porter added to the rush when she called IRAs "the most valuable tax shelter ever devised for the average individual."

All that glitters...

So what's wrong with the new IRAs? Plenty. If Congress had burnt the midnight oil for a year it couldn't have invented a more inequitable and subversive pension scheme.

First, IRAs will still exclude the vast majority of wage earners who cannot afford to save anything, regardless of the tax shelter. For those who can afford it, IRAs offer financial security at the cost of accepting full responsibility for planning and funding an individual account. The employer's role neatly disappears, "externalized" from company balance sheets like so many other production costs.

And that's just for starters. IRAs could undermine union efforts to bargain for broader company pension plans, or push for cost-of-living adjustments in existing plans. Since IRAs offer a "private" solution to worker retirement, they may also be used to soften up the public for renewed attacks on the Social Security system—the most effective nonmarket social program in U.S. history.

By providing yet another tax shelter for wealthy investors, IRAs will also tack one more nail in the coffin of the municipal bond market, traditionally the financial underpinning of U.S. cities. Finally, IRAs will make community or union control of existing pension funds even more difficult by emphasizing individual, rather than social, control of capital.

In short, IRAs are a Trojan Horse calculated to deceive. The only millionaires they are likely to create already work in the financial industry.

The layers of deception begin with the

percent of the amount withdrawn, plus an immediate tax assessment. So it helps to have a lot of disposable income. In addition, the benefits of the tax shelter are much greater for those in upper income tax brackets than for the average wage earner.

Middle-aged professionals with high incomes but no retirement plan appear to benefit most from the IRAs. They can afford to make the annual investments, are in a high enough tax bracket to gain from the tax shelter, and presumably are sophisticated enough to manage the dozens of accounts now available.

"IRAs don't offer much for most people in the organized labor movement," adds Rob Layton, a consultant on pension plans for the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department. "Social Security is still the most valuable option."

The biggest class of beneficiaries, however, are not professional workers but the major U.S. corporations that have resist-

The three-year study concluded that the U.S. still did not have an adequate retirement system and called for a "minimum universal pension plan" independent of Social Security.

Shifting responsibility.

"The report didn't specify who was going to pick up the tab," says Larry Litvak, a financial consultant for Community Economics, Inc., in Oakland. "The corporations were immediately upset—they didn't want responsibility for such a system. In many ways, the IRAs represent the congressional response to that report. The law shifts responsibility for savings and retirement to the household level, away from any concept of socialized capital."

Private pension consultant Lloyd Kaye of William M. Mercer Co. adds, "IRAs could be one of the most important elements in relieving an employer's obligation toward employee pensions. They



"They won't help all those people who are struggling just to pay the rent each month," says one critic.

ad campaigns. For example, Northern California Savings features a guy shouting, "I'm gonna be a millionaire!" followed by a quick explanation of how a tax-free investment of \$2,000 a year for 35 years at 12 percent interest will balloon to just under \$1 million. But the ads don't say how much buying power \$1 million will have in the year 2017. A constant 12 percent interest rate over 35 years implies underlying inflation of about 10 percent. Adjusted for inflation, that \$1 million expressed in 1982 dollars comes to just \$34,407—hardly a bonanza. "By 2017, we might all be millionaires," says Tibbs of Citizens for Tax Justice.

The second layer of deception involves who benefits from the IRAs. The ads suggest they are for everyone. But \$2,000 represents savings of \$1 per hour for a full-time worker, or 20 percent of income for someone earning \$5 an hour. The current U.S. savings rate is barely over 4 percent, and not likely to climb during the recession. "IRAs don't help all those people who are struggling just to pay the rent each month," Tibbs adds. "You need a surplus to begin with."

Individual retirement accounts also can't be touched until retirement age—59-and-a-half. The penalties for tapping them early for any reason are severe: 10

ed setting up comprehensive pension funds for decades. In 1979, only 42 percent of active workers were covered by a private pension, and barely 25 percent were actually vested, or qualified for those benefits. Most companies still have a 10-year vesting period—a ridiculous standard in light of the U.S. median job tenure of just 3.6 years. Even if only white-collar workers are considered, median job tenure is only 4.8 years for professionals and 5.9 years for managers—still far short of the usual vesting period. In addition, company pensions are usually not "portable"—you can't take them with you—so the accumulated years toward vesting are lost with each job switch.

Shorter vesting periods and portability would seem obvious solutions, but so far Congress has not interfered. "It's kicked around every few years in the legislature, but never taken very seriously," says Stephen Smith, director of the California Tax Reform Association in Sacramento.

The inequities of the private pension system are by now well known, publicized by Ralph Nader and others over the past few years. And last April Congress received much the same evidence when President Carter's Commission on Pension Policy presented its final report.

could mean the end of indexing of pensions."

IRAs philosophical shift of retirement responsibility from group to individual comes at a time of unprecedented Republican attack on the Social Security system. President Reagan attempted to cut benefits or extend the working age three times last year. He was turned back three times by the 36 million Americans currently receiving Social Security benefits. But Reagan's advisors promise that the President is not through yet.

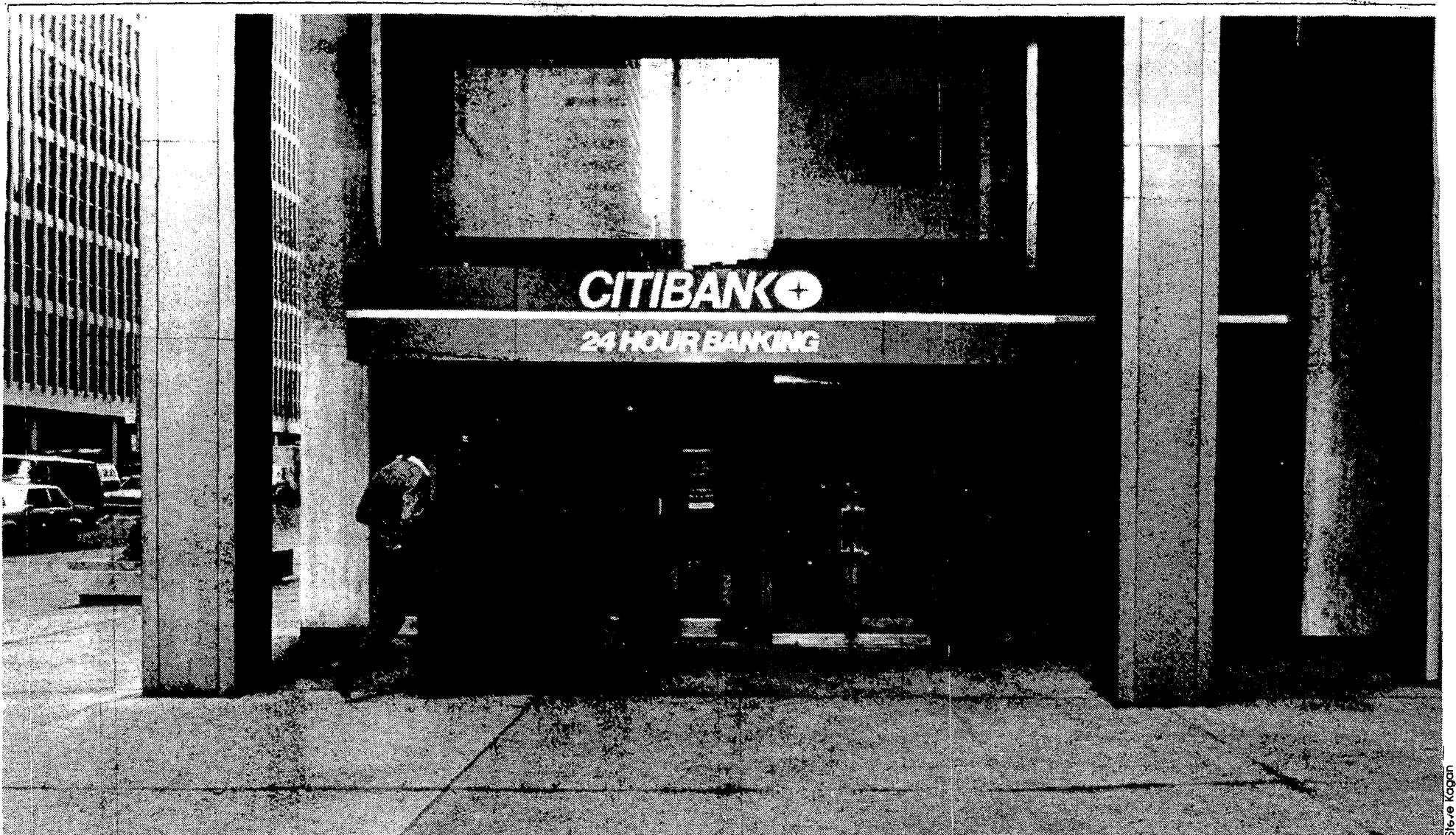
Dr. Jerry Jordan of the Council of Economic Advisors predicts that Congress will soon cut back the Social Security cost of living index as one way to trim the federal deficit. Retirement age, early retirement benefits, minimum benefits, and outside earnings are all scheduled for attack once again in 1982.

"Congress is now saying to the public, 'You misunderstood the Social Security system,'" Underwood of Merrill Lynch comments. "Social Security was never intended as a perfect retirement plan. It can only cover a portion of retirement benefits." Merrill Lynch, he says, believes IRAs are a perfect vehicle for relieving pressure on the system.

The Wall Street Journal expressed that opinion three months before Congress passed the Economic Recovery Tax Act last August. Staff reporter Jill Bettner identified IRAs as "a sort of early warning gambit. The idea is to lay the political groundwork now for almost certain eventual cutbacks in Uncle Sam's retirement program by inducing Americans to start

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FINANCE



In setting investment policy, the funds' private managers have generally followed their own self-interest and the conventional wisdom among their corporate brethren.

Can pension funds save the Frostbelt?

By Chuck Fager

WASHINGTON

IN MANY CITIES ACROSS THE Northeast and Midwest, a growing number of workers, particularly union members, are asking themselves and their leadership some hard questions:

- Why was union members' pension money used to finance construction of the headquarters of the National Right to Work Committee, one of the most virulent and effective anti-union lobbies in the country?
- Why were millions of dollars in union pension funds loaned to the J.P. Stevens textile company at a time when that corporation was the target of labor's most intense organizing crusade of the past decade?
- Why have tens of billions of pension dollars collected from workers in the Northeast-Midwest Frostbelt been siphoned out of their region to finance the export of jobs to the Sunbelt and low-wage countries overseas, steadily undermining the economies of the Frostbelt states?
- Why haven't these billions of pension dollars been used instead to revive the Frostbelt economy and save the workers' jobs?

Over the past 40 years, union and public employee pension funds have grown so rapidly that they have become the biggest pool of private capital in the world—\$800 billion worth by current estimates. And they are growing so fast that some projections say the amount will total \$3 trillion by 1994.

But the people and groups that contribute to these funds and technically "own" them do not control their use. Until recently they were controlled almost exclusively by private pension fund managers, mainly those employed by large banks and insurance companies.

The fund managers have been following their own self-interest and the conventional wisdom among their corporate establishment brethren. They have invested the bulk of the funds outside the Frostbelt—away from unions, away from environmental restrictions and away from troublesome democratic governments, preferring authoritarian, low-wage third world countries.

As union members and public employ-

ees become aware of these realities, they are calling for changes in the control and use of their pension fund moneys, changes that would make this enormous pool of capital an asset to their regions rather than a liability.

Randy Barber is one of the main figures behind the growing move for change in pension fund investment practice. Barber is a Washington-based activist and writer, formerly associated with the Peoples Bicentennial Commission, the activist group that tried to inject a populist radical note into the official Bicentennial celebrations.

After the Bicentennial was over, Barber and his colleague at the PBC, Jeremy Rifkin, spent a year researching the issue of the use of union pension funds. Then they wrote a book, *The North Will Rise Again*, published in 1978 by Beacon Press. The book's main message was summed up in a comment by L. Philip Sipser, a labor pension lawyer the authors interviewed: "They [the fund managers] sup at labor's table, but after eating our food and drinking our liquor, then they go ahead and help to smash us."

Not surprisingly, the book had its greatest impact within the labor movement, particularly in the Industrial Union Department of the AFL-CIO, and Barber has spent much of the four years since its publication exploring the issues involved and working with interested unions.

"Pension funds now own about 25 percent of the outstanding shares of stock in the United States, and 40 percent of the bonds," Barber explained. "These funds now provide one-fourth of all the capital accumulation process. That's why they have become so big and so important to the economy."

When he began investigating how these huge funds were being managed, Barber found they were draining huge sums away from the Frostbelt, where the bulk of union membership is concentrated. And in the process, they had been producing a very poor return for their beneficiaries. He pointed out in the book that between 1966 and 1976 the average return on pension investments was one-third less than the return on the Standard and Poor representative index of 500 stocks, about 4.3 percent compared to 6.6 percent for the stock index.

More recent figures indicate that the

funds haven't improved their average earnings much since then. As AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland described it, this performance was "less than the interest rate in savings accounts during the same period." Robert A. Georgine, president of the Federation's Building and Construction Trades Department, testifying in 1980 before a Presidential Commission on Pension Policy, blasted what he called "traditional investment policies that provided miserable returns, and at the same time, undercut not only the social objectives of participants and beneficiaries, but their economic well-being and that of their plans as well."

Barber argues in the book that "the record of bank investments of pension funds is so poor that one is forced to conclude that either the investment community is virtually incompetent or the system in which it is investing is on its deathbed, or both." He charges that much of this poor performance is due to the fact that

Union and public employee pension funds have become the world's largest pool of private capital—but their contributors don't control their use.

the banks and insurance companies have used the funds to prop up the stocks of big American corporations during an era in which these companies were essentially stagnating. One reason the banks were doing this was because they were tied in to these same companies as creditors and through huge deposits and did not want to see their clients sink, even at the cost of lower returns for the pension funds.

Defenders of the investment community dismiss such criticisms as sour grapes or irresponsible sniping. For example, Professor Roy Schotland of Georgetown University, while dismissing *The North*

Will Rise Again during testimony before a Senate subcommittee, agreed that "it is true that professional investment managers have not done well in pursuing 'maximum return on investments'—judged by hindsight." But, he added, "today many second-guessers scoff that savings accounts have done better than the stock market over most of the last decade, and they are correct as far as that goes. But how many such scoffers called any turn in advance?" Investing, he concluded, is a tough, uncertain business no matter who is at the controls.

No doubt Schotland is right, as far as that goes. The other warning cry from pension fund managers is that if their status quo is tampered with, the funds' long-term growth will be seriously damaged. As Harrison Smith, vice president of Morgan Guaranty Trust Bank, one of the biggest in the pension industry, told the same Senate subcommittee: "I believe bringing in highly subjective social investment criteria would have only one predictable outcome: the long-term financial interests of the beneficiaries would suffer." A witness from Citibank, another giant in the field, echoed Smith's admonition.

To be sure, fooling with pension capital for non-economic purposes can cause havoc; the well-known looting of various Teamsters Union pension funds by big-time mobsters is proof enough. But is this type of disaster the only likely outcome if the status quo is altered? Or are there alternative investment strategies that are both safe, productive and socially responsible?

Blue chip investments.

Barber thinks there are, and a growing number of unions and states agree with him. These alternatives can be as simple as a choice between, say, buying shares in IBM or Xerox. Both are blue chip stocks, as respectable as they come. But Xerox is a unionized company, while IBM is notoriously non-union. The same is true throughout the blue chip ranks: some have adjusted to unions, while others resist them fiercely. Why shouldn't a union pension fund pick and choose among them?

As John Lyons, president of the Ironworkers Union, tells his audiences at pension seminars, nowadays "pension funds are invested in companies which are

among the most anti-union, export workers' jobs to low-wage countries, ignore workers' needs for health and safety protection and in other ways hinder rather than help workers in the achievement of their most basic and legitimate objectives. This situation must be turned around."

(Some unions have learned that one way it can be turned around is by making stock ownership and investment a direct weapon in labor disputes. For example, the Air Line Pilots Association won a strike against an Alaska airline a few years back by mounting a successful proxy fight that put pro-union members on the airline's board. On the other side of the continent, the United Mine Workers forced the Duke Power Company in North Carolina to settle a strike in 1977 by getting commitments from 59 other unions to boycott Duke shares in their pension investments. A similar capital boycott was part of the textile workers union campaign against the J.P. Stevens Company.)

For strict investment purposes, there are numerous responsible alternatives to the traditional fund manager's focus on Fortune 500 stocks. One of the most common is to put some funds into mortgages, especially those eligible for government insurance. A model of this approach, the Hawaii Employees Retirement System, has been using 30 percent of its \$1.4 billion in assets to underwrite mortgages for its members. Insured mortgages are a very safe investment, and with interest rates around 15 percent, a fund can beat the market rate by a few points and still bring back a hefty rate of return for its beneficiaries. The Hawaii fund manager told a union interviewer last summer that they had not had a single foreclosure out of 20,000 mortgages made since the program began in 1959.

Mortgages are such an attractive form of alternate investment that numerous unions and states are getting on the bandwagon. Construction craft unions, whose members were the first to feel the impact of the recent collapse of the housing market in the face of soaring interest rates,

have been in the forefront of this development. Perhaps the model plan is one developed by 20 unions in the Los Angeles area as the Construction Industry Real Estate Development Financing Foundation of Southern California, which only began operating a year ago but has been facilitating investment of \$15 million per month in union-built construction projects.

Similar programs are being developed in numerous other cities. A recent study based on the assumptions of the Los Angeles foundation projected that \$1 billion invested in this way would produce nearly \$5 billion in new economic activity in California, including 86,000 jobs and nearly \$500 million in ultimate tax revenues. With this kind of benefit possible, it is hardly surprising that the California public employees pension fund, with \$30 billion in assets, has just received legislative approval to begin offering mortgages to its 800,000 members, much the same way the Hawaii fund does.

In Connecticut, state treasurer Henry Parker won approval last year of an ambitious program to pump up to \$450 million of the state's \$1.5 billion in pension moneys into mortgages. (Parker had earlier persuaded the state to establish its own securities firm to handle the fund's stock transactions, which saves the state millions in brokers' fees.) Public employees will have first preference for these loans. Similar efforts are getting underway or are under serious consideration in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio and other states.

Reversing the decline.

However, while housing investment can ease a recession's impact on a local level, other kinds of investments, particularly in new job-creating technologies, will be needed to reverse the long-term decline of the Frostbelt's economic base. This will mean channeling funds to promising smaller companies that have long been neglected by orthodox pension investment practice. The AFL-CIO, at its last convention, adopted a resolution sup-

porting use of pension fund capital for "economic activity aimed at job creation" and to "promote the 'reindustrialization' of the country in such a way as to enhance employment opportunities and well-being of union members as well as the unemployed, the underprivileged and the poor."

In pursuit of this objective, the Industrial Union Department of the AFL-CIO launched last year a monthly newsletter called *Labor and Investments* to report on developments in the field. (The newsletter is mainly written by Barber, who is a consultant to the federation.) The Department is also conducting an ongoing series of seminars to educate local union officials around the country to the possibilities and problems of pension alternatives.

Investments in new technology are, of course, more risky than mortgage loans, though the payoff from successful innovations is higher. Connecticut has led the

Putting funds into mortgages is one of the numerous responsible alternatives to investing in Fortune 500 stocks.

way in this field also, having established in 1972 the Connecticut Product Development Corporation, with the authority to make loans to small and medium-size firms in the state for product research and development. The companies agree to pay the state royalties from the sales of any new products thus developed. In 1981 the Ohio legislature passed a law that allows the state's pension funds to put up to 5 percent of its \$12 billion bankroll into new and promising—but risky—Ohio-based companies.

California has taken this idea the farthest, however. Last spring a governor's task force on public investment issued a report based on a year's study of how best to use the state's \$30 billion public employees pool. The report concluded that "while prudent standards of investment must be respected, there must be a systematic effort to establish a relationship between these capital resources and the capital needs of the state's economy." To establish such a relationship, the task force recommended using pension funds to support new product development, plant modernization, energy conservation and alternatives (especially solar) as well as housing. In response to the report, the legislature recently created a Pension Investment Unit within the governor's office. Nathan Gardels, director of the unit, commented last summer that "this is the one place in the country where we have the authority and the full backing of the state to begin to implement these ideas. We'll obviously be carefully watched by other states to see how successful we are."

Socialist building blocks.

For Barber, a veteran '60s and '70s activist, the burgeoning interest in pension fund reform is not just a way of blunting the impact of the current recession and reviving the declining regions of the Frostbelt. He sees this movement also providing the building blocks for a socialist revolution, the basis for a public and worker-owned sector, the beginning of what he calls in his book "a serious campaign for public control over economic planning in the northern states. With claims of over \$200 billion and more in pension fund capital between them, both labor and the northern states are in a good position to turn these various mechanisms and precedents into the beginnings of a viable alternative system."

It could turn out that way, if most of the states and unions in the Frostbelt somehow came under radical leadership within the next few years. But such a development is, to say the least, unlikely. For instance, the construction trade unions that have been in the forefront of using pension funds for construction mortgages are among the most conservative elements in the house of labor; but they are likely to emerge from this period stronger rather than weaker, precisely because they used these funds to preserve their members' jobs.

Perhaps a more plausible scenario is that an infusion of well-managed pension fund capital in the Frostbelt could revital-

ize capitalism there as it revitalized the economy. After all, there is very little in the strategy that would be objectionable to most Reagan Republicans in the Frostbelt. They would likely be jostling as hard as anyone else for a piece of the pension-fund action.

Even though more and more unions are waking up to the generally substandard performance of their traditional fund managers, a wholesale rejection of private fund management is unlikely. Perhaps the old managers will be replaced by a slick new breed that knows how to keep customers satisfied.

According to Barber, such a development is already underway. "The Prudential and Aetna insurance companies, two of the biggest managers of pension funds, are now offering pools of union-only investments," he said. "And there are a couple dozen smaller outfits already doing the same thing."

He added, somewhat ruefully, that he is getting accustomed to hearing pin-striped investment types swear up and down of their loyalty and devotion to the future of the American labor movement. "I even think," he said, "that a couple of them are sincere."

Even if the others are in it only for the labor movement's money, the effect seems likely to be the same: customers will get what they want, within the framework of the existing order. And there is little doubt about the value of pension fund capital investment to the future of the American economy, especially in the Frostbelt. A recent report by AT&T's Corporate Planning Division summed up the strategy: "The coming debates may well result in the most profound changes in the economic and social systems of the U.S. since the New Deal."

Chuck Fager writes regularly on policy issues for alternative newspapers.

IRAs

Continued from page 7
saving more on their own."

IRAs could also cut short attempts to influence the allocation of capital in the U.S. Just when the AFL-CIO is beginning to talk about labor control of pension fund assets, Congress introduces retirement accounts designed for and controlled by the individual. "We don't have any leverage in the financial market by ourselves," says Layton of the IUD. "The IRAs could undermine the gains we've made under the Community Reinvestment Act, and split the labor movement over collective versus individual pension strategies."

Litvak of Community Economics thinks that the kinds of investments people make in IRAs will also limit the possibilities for social control of capital. "Because of the way the tax laws are written, people are encouraged to put short-term investments in their IRAs—certificates of deposit or taxable bonds," he says. "That's the opposite of what large group plans can do, such as making long-term investments in housing or community development."

All of these considerations, of course, really don't answer the question of whether you should or shouldn't open an IRA. That really depends on a person's income, age, family size and financial plans. "If you don't need the money until you retire, it's a good deal, but not a great deal," says Dan Lindheim, an economist on the staff of Congressman Ron Dellums (D-Calif.). "But at the lower tax brackets, the whole thing is dubious."

Making that private decision, however, really misses the point. As Dean Tibbs says, most people are losing ground to inflation, and are less and less likely to have the savings they need to open an IRA. "Asking people now to finance their own retirement is almost pathetic. It's a return to the ethics of the '20s."



Steve Kugon



Salvador

Continued from page 3

ication the president has just made shows there has indeed been substantial progress toward each of the desired goals laid out in law."

When asked about the reported Morazan massacre, Enders said it was impossible to prove or disprove that it had taken place. But he admitted that "civilians did die during the operation, but no evidence could be found to confirm that government forces systematically massacred civilians in the operation zone, nor that the number of civilians killed even remotely approached the number being cited in other reports circulating internationally." And he said 900 could not have been killed since only 300 people lived in the area.

But Enders had more trouble during the hearings dealing with the raid on Jan. 31. "I deplore what appears to be the excessive violence of this action," he said, adding, "and I find it difficult to buy the notion that there was in fact a fire fight and that this was the result of it."

During the two days of hearings, Enders and Secretary of State Haig both focused on U.S. strategic interests and East-

West considerations in El Salvador, steering the discussion away from human rights concerns. "The decisive battle for Central America is underway in El Salvador," Enders told the senators. And in reference to Cuban and Nicaraguan intervention in El Salvador, Haig told them "we will do whatever is necessary to contain the threat. The administration believes that elections next month for a constituent assembly are what's needed in El Salvador."

But several members of Congress, reflecting constituent sentiment, see El Salvador from a different perspective. While, for example, the administration continues to view the killing of the American church women as peripheral to larger geopolitical concerns, they see the murder of Americans as central to understanding the kind of government that exists in El Salvador. They still feel American embassies should protect U.S. citizens, not apologize for El Salvador's assailants. Rep. Bonker said he was shocked that the Reagan administration, "which is outraged by terrorist attacks on American citizens in other parts of the world does not show similar concern for our citizens in El Salvador."

And Congress can't help but see the ghost of Vietnam in El Salvador, since some of the same people are testifying before them: Enders was U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia during that time and

Haig served on Henry Kissinger's National Security Council staff. Only 12 years ago Congress was hearing them speak about communist infiltration into South Vietnam and elections as a political panacea for Saigon's problems.

Even the most ardent congressional critics of U.S. policy in El Salvador like Rep. Studds don't believe the votes are there to block the administration's policies. Their counterstrategy, Studds said, is "to make it as costly as possible for this administration in political terms to pursue the course of action it seems bent on pursuing."

For now the administration has the upper hand on El Salvador. But this past week has been costly on Capitol Hill. Now there is a gulf of doubt in Congress that wasn't there after the El Salvador hearings last May. Congress has its guard up, and the administration knows there will be more hearings in the weeks ahead. Another certification is due in July, and at some point another vote will be taken on increased aid. Eventually a majority of Americans and their representatives in Congress may again turn away from supporting policies they can no longer believe in if the administration's credibility gap grows too wide.

William Buzenberg is foreign affairs correspondent for National Public Radio in Washington.

UAW

Continued from page 6

management, partial public ownership (raised with Chrysler but immediately dropped), local content laws, plant closing restrictions, joint control over introduction of new technology (a subordinate issue in 1979 negotiations but neglected so far this year).

The new bargaining conditions are, in addition, clearly a stimulus to more aggressive organizing and to income security programs, which are at best needed safety nets for victims. Protectionism, which many UAW officers indulge in rhetorically, is another logical response. The UAW has finessed that impulse with its local content proposals. Those would still bring the product competition that the U.S. auto companies so desperately need if they are ever going to build a reliable, intelligent car.

The bargaining world has changed in ways more radical than any time since the rise of the CIO. If there is any historical analogy, perhaps the best is the decade of the '20s, when quite different, dramatic changes in U.S. industry and the labor market devastated the few industrial unions of the time. "In the '20s union leaders seemed bereft of ideas to deal with this decline of their movement," historian Irving Bernstein wrote. "They were ideological prisoners of the past."

For decades labor has regarded management as the unquestioned decision-maker over investment, products, technology and geographical location. If the labor movement were to remain a prisoner of that recent ideological past, the parallels with the '20s—drastic decline—could prove all too true. But it is possible to break the ideological bondage, which would necessitate very serious confrontation with management. The auto negotiations could be, once again, a pattern setter for labor, pointing unmistakably in the direction of greater union contractual and political control over capital's course.

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IN THE WORLD

FRANCE



As chairman of the opposition *Rencontres Communistes*, Henri Fiszbin (right) has the encouraging manner of a school teacher—the very antithesis of the know-it-all George Marchais (left).

Poland policy splinters PCF

By Diana Johnstone

EUROCOMMUNISM HAS BEEN largely squeezed out of the French Communist Party (PCF), but is still hanging around on the sidelines, notably in a Paris group called *Rencontres Communistes* (Communist Encounters). Although its 30 founders are mostly intellectuals—a social category the PCF can always do without—it is headed by a leading member of the full-time apparatus, Henri Fiszbin, who has such perfect class and political credentials (Paris worker, joined PCF at age 15, elected to national assembly, first secretary of PCF's important Paris Federation) that he is hard to dismiss.

But the PCF leadership dismissed him nevertheless—first “resigning” him “for health reasons” (when he was in perfect health) from his post as head of the Paris Federation, and then, a few months ago, from the Party itself. Fiszbin had politely but repeatedly suggested that the PCF live up to its own professed principles and policies. He was then expelled for statements he had never made.

The RC people refuse to accept their expulsion for factionalism and other misdeeds, and continue to call themselves Communists and address themselves to fellow Party members, mainly through their weekly, *RC Hebdo*. Its sharp analysis is read with relish by a number of more timid dissidents still in the Party—and perhaps by secret supporters high up in the Party who want to prepare an alternative to current leadership. Recently, *RC* published the full text of the Italian Communist Party's formal condemnations of the military coup in Poland. The RC group could be the nucleus of an Italian-style Communist Party in France, if there were any sign it could grow to more than a tiny sect, which is not the case today. RC's dingy headquarters up four flights of stairs in the Paris garment district recalls the heroic youth of the working-class movement—a far cry from the modern glass fortress up the hill at the Place du Colonel Fabien where George Marchais and company hold sway.

In mid-January, a few hundred people filled a small Paris auditorium for a panel discussion of “Poland and the future of socialism” sponsored by *Rencontres Communistes*. It was an unusually good-natured gathering as such things go in Paris. As chairman, Fiszbin has the mild encouraging manner of a schoolteacher ever hoping to hear a student come up with an original idea—the very antithesis of the irascible know-it-all Marchais. Since going into opposition, Fiszbin has stuck to the role of encouraging debate rather than engaging in it himself. Recalling his group's categorical condemnation of the Dec. 13 coup in Poland, he stressed a favorite theme: “Save the honor of the French Communist Party and all those who share the communist ideal” by showing that countless communists are in absolute disagreement with the PCF leadership.

Before the microphone was passed around the audience, panelists took turns analyzing Poland, the Soviet bloc and the PCF. Jean-Louis Moynot, who recently resigned from the leadership group of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) out of disagreement over policy, made a more theoretical contribution, suggesting that the Leninist revolution had “lost its soul—that is, the workers councils” in the struggle for state power. The only hope for unblocking the stagnant situation in the East is for the revolutionary dynamic to develop where productive forces and human creativity are most advanced, that is, in the developed capitalist countries, Moynot said.

Reviewing Soviet bloc repressions of deviations from the “Soviet model” since Yalta, Lilli Marcou noted that the USSR was not solely to blame, since the Kremlin was often egged on by its allies. Thus the Chinese were the first to insist on intervention in Hungary in 1956, and today Rumanian leader Ceausescu is particularly anxious to see the independent labor movement suppressed in Poland.

Reviewing recent Polish history, Francois Hincker noted that the Polish United Workers (Communist) Party was a particularly artificial creation, with no real convictions or popular base, put in power by the Russians and never able to compete successfully for influence with

the genuine institution already occupying the terrain, the Catholic Church. So by 1956 it had to give up trying to collectivize farming, leaving 86 percent of farm land in private hands. This meant the Polish regime was never able to follow the Soviet model by wresting surplus capital from agricultural production in order to finance industrialization. Instead, it had to turn to foreign capital to industrialize, leading to the current disastrous indebtedness.

In past “normalizations,” it was noted, the USSR combined political crackdowns with material improvements that succeeded in pacifying most of the population. Past revolts in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland itself were followed by tangible improvements in living standards in those countries. But such a solution scarcely seems possible in the present Polish crisis. Eric Israelovitch pointed out that in the past three or four years, the USSR has been abandoning a whole range of economic mechanisms that sustained development of the Eastern European economies in the '50s, '60s and early '70s. The best-known of the mechanisms were favorable petroleum and raw material prices; around 1970, Eastern Europe got Soviet oil at about one-fourth of world market prices. With troubles of its own and rising military expenditures, the Soviet Union seems in no condition to keep buying off its satellites as in the past.

The impossible solution.

The conclusion from such analysis is that the PCF leaders, with their acceptance and even tacit approval of Jaruzelski's coup, are banking on an “Hungarian-style” solution (discreet liberalization, higher living standards) that is simply not possible in the case of Poland today.

The Eurocommunists think that by taking an unpopular position based on an unrealistic analysis, the PCF is further undermining its democratic credibility, and with it, the left coalition government. On Jan. 8, the leaders of the French Socialist and Communist parties met to renew their agreement on domestic policy, basis of the PCF participation in the cabinet, while agreeing to disagree on Poland. But in the long run, the Euro-

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communists believe that such a profound disagreement makes it impossible for the Socialists to maintain their government alliance with the Communists, which would mean a political shift toward the center.

For French communists, socialists and democrats, Poland has become “problem number one,” Eddy Kenig said, because of what had seemed to be the possibility of convergent movements toward democratic socialism in France and in an Eastern country like Poland. Thus what happened in Poland was bound to have political repercussions in France.

As an old party hand, Kenig offered an explanation of why the PCF leadership deliberately and knowingly chose a position on Poland that could only isolate it from other political forces and reduce its influence. Kenig saw in the PCF attitude a “profound pessimism” about both international and domestic prospects. “Contrary to all official statements, it seems to me that this move of cutting itself off, with all the risk it entails, stems from the idea that in a foreseeable lapse of time the left experience led by the Socialist Party will end in failure, and that what matters then is to preserve the chances of an alternative, of a communist party that has set itself apart (from such questions on Poland) and will be able to intervene as a revolutionary force having preserved its identity,” he said.

The PCF's adjustment to the present conditions in French society and the Soviet bloc “constituted a sort of painful ripping away from its identity,” leading to “an ideological vacuum, loss of certainties.” And as *Humanite* editor Roland Leroy has noted, “militants need certainties.” The PCF leadership, secretly aware of the faults of the Soviet model, undertook to lead the party gradually up to the level of its own analysis. But at some point, which Kenig placed in 1978, seeing the void ahead, the apparatus suddenly lost its nerve and has been back-tracking ever since.

The ruling caste.

In the discussion from the floor, one theme kept recurring: Eastern Europe has a new kind of class society, ruled by a new class, caste, state bourgeoisie, nomenklatura or whatever you want to call it, “and the same sort of ruling caste is being formed in the PCF.”

One militant who raised the question of the class struggle in Eastern Europe went on to ask: Isn't there a solidarity with Eastern European rulers in the PCF ap-

For French Communists and Socialists, Poland is now “problem number one.”

paratus with its petty bosses who enjoy exercising their scrap of power? Isn't this why the democratization started in the PCF and then stopped? Isn't there a class solidarity between the PCF apparatus and the class holding power in Poland?

Another stressed the importance of “the way the Communist Parties recruit in Eastern countries. Not on the basis of political consciousness—there isn't any. But for the top, the clever, ambitious ones, and underneath a mass of people from the working class characterized by conformity, obedience... They are picked like boy scouts: good comrades who aren't queer, etc.... People who stay in the norms, who don't make waves. This explains the blockage.”

Others, however, worried that for all this, much of the French working class had followed the PCF line on Poland. The strike called in solidarity with *Solidarnosc* was not a success. People said that a big part of the trouble was the noisy right-wing campaign around Poland, which scared away lots of workers and made it easier for PCF leaders to say, “You see, we are pure, we aren't involved in that indecent spectacle.” Some workers were also worried that the right wing was using Poland to prepare public opinion for World War III. ■

The Boat Stop

Interviews with Haitians interned at Lake Placid's Olympic Prison



BURLINGTON, VT.

WALL TO WALL CARPETING. Generous sleeping quarters. Three meals a day. These Haitian refugees have never had it so good. "And yet," says Berneville Elisnord, one of the 161 Haitian men interned at the Olympic prison near Lake Placid, N.Y., "I would rather sleep in the snow in a detention camp than be here in prison. At least there we would have hope. We have committed no crimes. Why are we here?"

The Olympic prison, now known as the Ray Brook Federal Correctional Institution,

Robin Lloyd is co-producer of the film *Black Dawn*, a documentary on life in Haiti, and is a member of the Burlington Peace Coalition.

tion, is set in Siberian isolation on a snow-covered road off the highway leading out of Lake Placid. The scene is in stark contrast to the homeland of these refugees—a hot, colorful island that impresses them with great vitality amid great poverty. They had lived there for six months, working on a film that brought them in contact with Haitian artists and writers. It was my first introduction to the third world. And here I was, in the "fourth world" of the world of refugees, the dispossessed who live at the sufferance of strangers or at the mercy of the elements. To have moved from the third to the fourth world—that was the plight of these people, a study in levels of powerlessness.

Officially, there are two reasons why the Haitians are imprisoned here. One is

that they are waiting for a judge to decide whether the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is legally bound to provide a lawyer for each refugee's court hearing on whether he or she is applying for political asylum. The other is that the Reagan administration considers all Haitians "economic refugees" who do not qualify for political asylum at all.

But there are other, unofficial reasons why these people are behind bars here. They are caught in a bureaucratic snarl that has so far cost American taxpayers over \$160 million. (It would, in fact, have been cheaper to give each of the 3,200 imprisoned Haitian refugees in America \$50,000 cash and fly them home.) They are reasons of international politics and strategy; in particular, President Reagan's view that cultivating anti-Soviet allies comes first and human rights second. To grant the refugees asylum would be a slap at Haitian ruler Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier. It would be an admission that there is in fact something wrong with his regime.

Life behind bars

Ray Brook is a medium security prison. No guard towers loom at the corners of the prison yard. Only a double chain link fence circles the perimeter, with loose rolls of concertina wire between, signals that this is an industrial park.

Paul Lefebvre, assistant commissioner to the warden, met me at the gate. Over a cup of coffee in his office, he explained some of the difficulties he has had in dealing with the Haitian "detainees."

Unlike the regular prison population. Detainees are not regular prisoners, he said, that they cannot be forced to work. In order to cut boredom he has tried to give them a job detail in which the detainees receive up to \$30 a week in exchange for working around the prison. But they had so far refused to participate. They are allowed some physical activity and walks to the cafeteria. A music program, a music program in French and English have been organized through local volunteer efforts, organized chiefly by the Catholic Church. He acknowledged that there is crowding in the Haitian wing, but people were living in space designed for 20.

Lefebvre escorted me to the detention building and set me up in a small viewing room. A guard then brought three men whose names had been given to me by a Catholic support group: Maxene Petit-Frere, Berneville Elisnord and Hendrik Desulme. After they were seated around the table, I found that speaking the Creole language and having lived in Haiti did not automatically win me trust. They were initially suspicious, and only opened up when I showed them some flyers from New York announcing a march on Washington organized by the Haitian community.

Continued on page 22



Imprisoned Haitian refugees Maxene Petit-Frere (left) and Berneville Elisnord (right)

Baby Doc Barbers Power For Loyalty

The oppressiveness and tragedy of life in Haiti has been growing into "a national disaster," in the words of Haitian writer Rene S. Benjamin, but the disaster was all but hidden from Americans until the influx of boat people.

Haiti's recent history has been shaped by the rule of Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier from 1957 to 1971, followed by that of his son Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier. Travelers to Haiti in the '60s routinely came back with horror stories of assassinations, poisonings, stealing of corpses and widespread brutality by the secret police. Baby Doc's regime has been less overtly cruel. During my first visit there in 1974, the police still dressed in black and carried whips to control the crowds during Mardi Gras. In later trips these trappings of repression were less in evidence. But the system set up by the

father has for the most part been maintained by the son.

The Duvalier government exercises its power through a unique form of decentralized terror. Duvalier grants the power to do anything at all within a designated fiefdom to members of the secret police (Tonton Macoute), "chefs" and voodoo priests, in exchange for complete loyalty.

It's commonly said in Haiti that the people are 90 percent Catholic and 100 percent voodoo. The voodoo religion embodies the people's African heritage and permeates much more than the religious sphere of life. One comment made to us by a Haitian artist who had been a voodoo priest expresses the connection between politics and religion in Haiti. "A good voodoo priest must practice with the right and the left hands," he said. That is, he must be responsive to the needs of the community—the rituals of community life, of birth and death and healing, expressed by the right hand as well as the "black" arts practiced by the left hand that include spells and amulets, superstitions of revenge and jealousy, catering to emotions that often destroy community bonds.

The Duvalier dynasty has formed solid ties with the voodoo practitioners of the left hand. These have been strengthened

by the breakdown of rural life that has caused many country people to move to the city, and, in their despair and isolation from nature, to turn to the superstitions of the left hand to obtain power through magic. Duvalier has manipulated these fears to extend his control over all aspects of life.

Recently, acts of political repression have increased. According to the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights, "In the period between the American presidential election and the inauguration of President Reagan, every newspaper, radio station and magazine in Haiti critical of the government was closed or had its staff replaced by the Haitian government." (*New York Times*, Nov. 19, 1981.)

■ Baby leaves home ■

In the economic sphere, Baby Doc has made a significant break with his father. He has sided with the country's new technocrats—the managers of capitalist production—and against the feudal landlords known as "dinosaurs" (forcefully represented in the government by arch-dinosaur Madame Duvalier, his mother).

The *Mouvement Haitien de Liberation*, a Marxist-Leninist exile group that has researched land reform in Haiti, argues that by opening the country up to multinational penetration, Baby Doc had precipitated the refugee crisis. "In establishing capitalist production in Haiti, the multinationals are sweeping away the small-scale, semi-feudal agriculture to form large-scale mechanized plantations, and in so doing are also sweeping millions of peasants off the land," the group has written. "It is these expropriated peasants, along with the small merchants and artisans connected to them, who make up today's boat people."

Recent developments sharpen the dilemmas faced by Haitian peasants. The *New York Times* recently reported that the U.S. is redesigning its aid program for Haiti to help Duvalier strengthen his trade and investment program. The U.S. currently provides Haiti with \$26 million a year for food and development and \$750,000 in military and training assistance.

"For the first time in history," Haiti's Foreign Minister, Edouard Francisque, said in an interview after the aid program was announced, "we have the feeling that the U.S. will really cooperate with Haiti." With an eye, no doubt, on a soft spot in President Reagan's heart, he added that "only America can save Haiti from Moscow. From now on we will work closely together. Haiti could be the Hong Kong, the Taiwan, the Singapore of the Caribbean."

Or it could become all of the above, as well as the next El Salvador. —R.L.



Boat people and land by Richard Wright

ere

EDITORIAL

New Deal gives way to the Raw Deal

Although strains of "Brother can you spare a dime?" echoed through the halls of Congress on Jan. 28, our legislators were not lamenting the Reagan administration's budget cuts. Instead, they were marking the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the president whose New Deal legacy Reagan has set out to destroy.

Called a traitor to his class by conservative businessmen and politicians during his first two terms, seen by some as a dangerous radical opening the door to so-

cialism in the U.S., Roosevelt succeeded in restoring public confidence in our system of large-scale corporate capitalism and in the government that administers it at a time when one of three workers was unemployed, 5,000 banks had failed and national income had fallen to less than half its 1929 level.

More appropriately understood as the Patrician as Opportunist, as historian Richard Hofstadter called him, Roosevelt radiated confidence and a determination to act while groping his way along contra-

dictory paths. After two terms, his administration had still not found the way to prosperity—it took production for World War II to get the unemployed back to work and the economy producing to capacity. But in those eight years Roosevelt presided over reforms that permanently changed the relation of government to the people of the U.S. in three substantial ways.

First, labor. In 1930, when Herbert Hoover was president, the AFL had 2,800,000 members, mostly organized into craft unions. In 1940, the combined membership of the AFL and the new Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) was 8,500,000, and the basic mass production industries in steel, auto and electrical manufacturing were largely organized. For the first time, labor had entered politics with both feet, and had become a force to be reckoned with, especially in the Democratic party. Indeed, in 1936, under the leadership of John L. Lewis, the CIO unions contributed the then enormous sum of \$770,000 to Roosevelt's re-election campaign. Of this \$469,000 came from Lewis' United Mine Workers, the largest single contribution to the Democratic party.

In addition, Lewis and Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers persuaded George Berry of the AFL Printing Pressman's Union to join in forming Labor's Non-Partisan Political League to help re-elect Roosevelt. Hillman and David Dubinsky of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union led a mass exodus of Socialists from the needle trades unions, putting the finishing touches on the Socialist party, whose presidential vote in 1936 fell to 187,000 from 885,000 four years earlier.

The rapid growth of the labor movement was facilitated first by Section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, and when that was declared unconstitutional, by the Wagner National Labor Relations Act of 1935. In turn, as militant workers occupied auto plants and swarmed into the new unions, the Roosevelt administration moved to cement its ties with labor. It did this so well that, in 1940, when John L. Lewis returned to the Republican party, he had to resign as president of the CIO, which he had founded, and in which he had been immensely popular.

Second, the federal government. Roosevelt is best remembered for bringing the federal government into an active role in stimulating the economy and assuming responsibility for the welfare of the American people. He moved most rapidly and consistently to provide relief, which had previously been the responsibility of private charity and bankrupt state and local governments. First came the Federal Emergency Relief Agency, then the Civil Works Administration, which provided work for four million people. Then, after a Democratic sweep of the 1934 elections, Congress approved an unprecedented \$4.9 billion appropriation that Roosevelt used to set up the Works Progress Administration, which employed millions of laborers and included the Federal Theater, Federal Writers and Federal Art projects, as well as the National Youth Administration, which provided training and work for youth. In addition, Roosevelt provided aid to housing through the Resettlement Agency and later the U.S. Housing Authority and the Federal Housing Authority.

Most important, in 1935 Roosevelt asked and got from Congress a social security act that set up our present system of social security and federal-

state unemployment insurance. It was an act that brought the U.S. in line with every other industrial nation, some of which, like Germany, had enacted similar legislation in the 19th century.

Third, the executive branch. Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson had earlier strengthened the power and enhanced the role of the presidency, but it was under Franklin Roosevelt that the White House finally became the focus of government, the initiator of virtually all legislation, the representative, in the popular mind, of the national interest. And, correspondingly, it was under Roosevelt that popular debate of policy through elected representatives in Congress declined, to be replaced by legislative initiatives from the president and his advisors.

As William E. Leuchtenberg points out, the most important formal contribution to this process was the creation of the Executive Office of the President in 1939. This Executive Order set up an Executive Office with six administrative assistants imbued with a passion for anonymity. To it, Roosevelt transferred the Bureau of the Budget (from the Treasury), and in later years such key agencies as the Council of Economic Advisors, the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency would be moved. From Roosevelt until the resignation of Richard Nixon, the Congress suffered a steady decline as an initiator of policy and a place to debate basic questions of national policy. With Nixon's near-impeachment, Congress reasserted its prerogatives, but only briefly.

No radical, more a savior of his class than a traitor to it, Roosevelt was an immensely popular president—because he had genuine concern for the well being of the American people—a sense of *noblesse oblige*—and because he knew that the system could not survive if its ruling class flaunted its power and its indifference to the suffering and voicelessness of the great majority of working men and women. Although his programs did not put most of the unemployed back to work, they did provide some stimulation to the economy, some income to the poor and an acknowledgment that a system that could not provide work and well being through the operation of marketplace had a responsibility to do so through its government.

This is the major difference between Roosevelt and Reagan. The first president since Hoover, possibly since Calvin Coolidge, openly to flaunt his partisanship for the wealthy, Reagan espouses the arcane myth that a free marketplace, unfettered by government constraints, can return us to a prosperity we have never known. Having attained the presidency at a time when the combination of New Deal style reforms and massive military spending are no longer enough to keep the system running reasonably well, Reagan would return us to a time of indifference to the suffering of the unemployed, the aged and the disadvantaged. Gambling that, perhaps, vast increases in military spending will stimulate the economy (which it will not), or that the "normal" operation of the business cycle will pull us out of the recession (which, at best, it will do only partially), Reagan is taking care of business—or so he believes.

But Reagan's thinly-disguised contempt for labor, blacks, the poor and the aged cannot long be covered over by his gee-whiz, nice-guy image. The suffering is too great, and the hypocrisy is too obvious. With the exhaustion of the New Deal, we now have the Raw Deal. How about a new deck?

Elected when the New Deal legacy has run out of steam, Reagan has revived the '20s indifference to suffering.



Drawing by David Levine reprinted with permission of N.Y. Review of Books, N.Y. Review, Inc. ©1981

LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

RECONSTRUCTION

PERMIT ME TO CORRECT ANN TATTERSAIL's erroneous reconstruction (*ITT*, Jan. 13) of my letter of Dec. 16 defending NARAL's support of Oregon's Sen. Packwood over Ted Kulongoski in 1980. Contrary to her assertions, I did not query the National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC) about their candidate's attitude "on abortion," but his position on free choice, and their reply, however guarded, could only be logically construed as negative. A.T. should address her demurral to NCEC. I hope she quotes Kulongoski more accurately than she has quoted me.

Michael Wells' perspective on the Oregon elections (*ITT*, Jan. 13), however, makes sense. If his appraisal of Packwood's political invulnerability is more accurate than NCEC's assessment, NARAL's fundraising was indeed misdirected. But he is remiss in overlooking the contribution made by the antichoice hit team in Portland called "Bridging the Gap," whose extraordinary scurvy attack on Packwood probably raised a lot more money for Bob than NARAL's own appeal.

—Audrey Patton
Moody, Mo.

NO LAPUS MENTIS HERE

CONGRATULATIONS ON PRODUCING a superb periodical. I am in the process of letting subs to about 20 other periodicals lapse. I am renewing only two—in *These Times* and *The Manchester Guardian*.

—Thomas P. Kapautals
Huntington, W.Va.

NURSING

I APPRECIATE THE ARTICLES ON WOMEN's issues in your paper. I am 65 years old and a feminist. I am a registered nurse. I stopped working in the '50s and would not work in today's hospitals. I am concerned about the infant formula abuse in the third world and this country.

The picture of a nursing baby [by Paul Comstock] (*ITT*, Jan. 20) has prompted me to write. I think this is such a good picture I want to send it to *InFact* and ask them to use it as a poster in the third world and U.S. We know that advertising works, especially when infant formula is advertised so much in the third world. I think we should also have a picture of third world babies nursing. Mothers are led to believe the bottle is much better than breast feeding. Nursing mothers in the U.S. have had a very difficult time nursing their infants in public because they are sent to rest rooms. Imagine nursing a baby in a smelly, dirty (usually) rest room. I think this picture and a black and Chicano baby nursing should be posted all over the U.S.—clinics, hospitals, doctors' offices, pediatricians. We will have to work on the doctors.

—Eleanor Turner White
Washington, Pa.

THERE FIRST

IT WAS SURPRISING AND GRATIFYING to read John Judis' "Inside Story" about Poland (*ITT*, Jan. 20). Judis described Poland's Solidarity as "the most advanced socialist movement to date."

I was delighted to see a "democratic socialist" acknowledge the fact that a revolutionary union movement, aiming at the goal of a worker self-managed economy through the means of direct action and the general strike, is more advanced than either Western "democratic socialism" or Eastern Leninist-Stalinism. It is something anarcho-sindicalists have been saying all along, and didn't need the benefit of obscure passages in the *Civil War in France* to reach that conclusion.

The only problem with Judis' comments was his dogmatic clinging to Marxist determinism. Apparently he feels Eastern European workers must endure "proto-socialist" Leninism as a precondition for socialism, while Western workers must "fulfill the promise of bourgeois democracy." Can it be that Judis' flirtation with anarcho-sindicalism is just a big tease?

—Jeff Stein
Champaign, Ill.

OBJECTIVES

IN HIS COMMENTS ON *TIME*'S ESSAY ON Communism and on Poland and the Soviet Union (*ITT*, Jan. 20), John Judis manages to present quite a distorted view of Marx's outlook. A key sentence of Judis reads: "The goals of communism, as originally understood by Marx were political, social and individual, not economic." An amazing statement—which he tries very hard to support with direct quotes from Marx.

In the limited space of a letter I prefer not to get into a battle of quotes. Thus, I will content myself with a brief statement of what I have learned from Marx and Engels on communism.

What actually were Marx's and Engels' views on the goals of communism? Contrary to Judis, communism as a mode of production—as a social formation—strives to achieve economic objectives. Based as it is on "the social ownership and control of production" (Judis' words in a somewhat different context) and on the most developed scientific and technological methods of production, communism aims at the production—and the consequent distribution—of an abundance of goods and services, something never before achieved.

"From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" is more than a slogan. It is an economic goal and a projected practice of communism, something capitalism, and even socialism as the first stage of communism, could not accomplish.

It is not clear what Judis means when he says that "socialism and communism [are] societies where the development of the individual need no longer be dictated by economic necessity." If by ending economic necessity he means that alienation and exploitation, unemployment and want, racism and sexism no longer dog the worker's steps, and he/she is no longer compelled to sell his/her labor power to the boss—then there is no disagreement.

Since under communism people still need to eat, have clothes and shelter, as well as a multiplicity of new needs, including the spiritual and cultural, in that sense "economic necessity" remains. In the process of Communist construction labor becomes the worker's prime need. This is an economic goal, even as it implies and projects "political, social and individual" goals. There is an intimate and veridical interrelationship here with the economic at the base.

The "economic necessity" of labor does not vanish with the advent of communism but labor itself is transformed. The "development of the individual"—with labor as a vital need—finds the worker enjoying his/her work, gradually revealing to himself and others his/her physical and spiritual potential and unfolding a many-sided personality.

May I quote from memory and paraphrase an old Marxist critique: How absurd it is to maintain that the ancients lived on politics, the middle ages on Catholicism, the modern age on economics and communism (according to Judis) on the absence of economics.

All this is of course not unrelated to Judis' pronouncements on the Soviet Union and Poland. For that another letter is called for.

—David Englestein
San Francisco

John Judis replies: I wish David Englestein had gone on to say how my mistaken view of Marx led to malign the Soviet Union and the Polish junta. I agree with Englestein that there is a close connection between the two issues.

Marx saw economics as a form of bourgeois ideology: it universalized capitalist market place relations and the utilitarian view of human nature—a human being as "homo economicus" ruled by this quest for pleasure in the form of wealth. Marx subtitled Capital a "critique of political economy."

Marx refused to transplant homo economicus onto the foreign soil of socialism or communism. Marx spoke of socialism's goal in social and political terms rather than in economic terms, e.g. as "an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all," "the positive abolition of human self-alienation." "Vulgar socialism has taken over from the bourgeois economists...the presentation of socialism as turning principally upon distribution," Marx wrote in his Critique of the Gotha Program.

By making the nature of socialism turn upon the satisfaction of economic needs, rather than upon cooperation, individuality and democracy, Soviet apologists have tried to paint over despotism with a veneer of socialist emancipation. The Soviet Union's capitalist opponents simply accept the Soviet definition and then show, as Time did, that Soviet citizens are neither free nor well-fed.

Englestein also misunderstands what I meant by citizens whose lives are no longer dictated by economic necessity. When human beings must devote most of their waking hours to production for survival, their lives become defined by economic necessity. Human diversity and individuality, knowledge and education exist only among the ruling classes. In socialism, as Marx saw it, the advances of production would enable the broad majority to have the time to enjoy the rights and privileges that were formerly reserved for the few.

WHICH CAME FIRST?

THE ADVERTISEMENT FOR DAUGHTERS & Sons of Liberty which appeared in the Jan. 27 issue of *ITT*, had two inadvertent errors. First, in the body of the ad, the name Daughters & Sons of Liberty appeared as "Sons & Daughters of Liberty." Second, Sidney Lens, well known peace leader and writer, was omitted from the list of endorsers.

—John Rossen
Chicago, Ill.

PLAYING HAVOC

READING YOUR EDITORIAL "THE Eastern style of reform," (*ITT*, Jan. 13), I couldn't help wondering who has the stronger claim to "profound contradictions." Bolsheviks who destroyed democracy in order to preserve socialism, or democratic socialists who fence the latter in order to preserve the former. Indeed, the whole piece rang with the complacency, mor-

alism and practical confusion that have given the term "social democrat" such a pejorative connotation over the years. To say that a "socialist system of production requires a pluralist democracy" and that "that means a multi-party system" is easy enough. But as Marxists we know that history has always played havoc with ideals that, however eloquently stated, are not firmly rooted in objective realities. Could the Bolsheviks, for example, have defended the Soviet state by extending the vote, and therefore political power, to self-proclaimed "socialists" who were actively engaged in counterrevolution during the Russian Civil War (1918-20)? Could the descent into bureaucratic despotism have been arrested without handing over the Revolution to the powerful forces of international capital? Regarding the more recent history of Eastern Europe, can heretofore Stalinist political systems develop democratic norms in the dangerous setting of Cold War conflict, of which it is the unfortunate focus? Simply to state your preference for democratic socialism without accounting for realities is so much useless preaching.

Nowhere, however, was this tendency to moralizing worse than in your reference to the absence of democratic pluralism leaving the working population with "no incentive to be creative, to show initiative," and pointing the finger of proof at the lag in Soviet agriculture and industrial production. Since when does a socialist newspaper extoll the virtues of capitalist accumulation? For a minute I thought I had gotten *The National Review* in the mail by mistake. You imply that it is not state planning that places the bulk of Soviet resources at the behest of a gargantuan defense establishment, or the lack of access to or interest in international markets, cheap labor and raw materials that keep the Soviet economy from producing at Western levels. No siree. The Russkies are in trouble because Communism makes them lazy.

—Peter Anastos
Washington, D.C.

Editor's note: We fail to see the connection between giving people incentive to be creative and capitalist accumulation. So, one more time: Socialism means social control of investment. In the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe the means of production are socially owned, according to law, but the political system does not allow for popular participation in the process of determining what to produce or how to produce it. Socialism requires that investment decisions be brought under the control of the people as a whole, as democratically as possible. We know of no system of government more democratic than representative democracy. Representative democracy cannot be democratic unless free choices can be made about who will represent the people. This cannot be done when one party, especially one composed of a small minority of the population, has a monopoly on political legitimacy and power. Representative democracy requires the freedom to organize parties according to popular need.

A system that denies such freedom removes the only incentive the people can have to show initiative and be creative. Why work hard and think about making society more efficient when you have no voice in setting policy—especially in a society where the bourgeois incentive of private capital accumulation is not possible?

CORRECTION

The photo appearing on page 3, *ITT*, Vol. 6, No. 10, should have been credited to Warren Friedman. Our apologies.

Editor's note: Please try to keep letters less than 250 words long. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

ROBERTA LYNCH

Big government: a question for the left

By Roberta Lynch

ONE OF THE HALLMARKS of the conservative revival of the '80s has been its popularization of anti-government rhetoric and sentiment. The federal government in particular has been portrayed as the source of economic decline, the peddler of an array of programs and regulations that crush individual initiative, penalize the over-taxed middle class and stifle the beneficent impulses of free enterprise.

Not surprisingly both corporate interests and right-leaning politicians have served to foster this trend, finding it largely convergent with their own designs. The surprise is in the extent to which it has found a sympathetic ear among the general population.

While there are several specific historical causes commonly cited to explain this phenomenon—the Vietnam debacle, the Watergate affair, abuses in social welfare programs—there is also a deeper underlying factor that often goes unacknowledged, even on the left.

But we need to redefine the terms of debate and focus on democracy and the meaning of politics in the U.S.

Whether seen as friend of foe, government is primarily perceived as profoundly "other." The great majority of citizens do not understand it as their own instrument, their collective representative, their common identity. Probably the most striking symptom of this estrangement from governmental structures is our na-

tion's dramatically low voter turnout, even in hotly contested presidential races. But far more serious is a kind of death of the political imagination—the inability to conceive that our processes of governance could be other than they are.

Some theorists argue that this radical disjuncture between people and government is a consequence of size and bureaucratization. Such arguments cannot be dismissed out of hand: they challenge us to examine the nature of technologically advanced societies and the ways in which social, political and cultural progress may be impeded by the forces that foster economic growth.

These arguments, however, fail to take into account the variables in the system that could be altered were there the will to do so. The mutable factors are far more significant than the accumulated weight of bureaucracy in giving rise to our present arrangements.

There is, first and more important, the distortion of democratic intent produced by the diligence of the state in defending capitalist prerogatives.

There is the role of the media in trivializing political issues and in fostering cults of personality. And there is the combination of greed, competitiveness and power-mongering that has come to characterize our elected officials and to shape the way in which we choose them.

Finally, there is the demise—if it ever truly existed—of political parties as advocates of ideas and implementers of programs.

In all of this the essential understanding of governance as a democratic project, shaped and re-shaped through a conscious process of popular participation, has been lost. Those who hold power in this country would probably prefer to keep this idea buried in the hard earth of our past. But the left—if it is serious about political revitalization—must place this concept at the heart of its concerns.

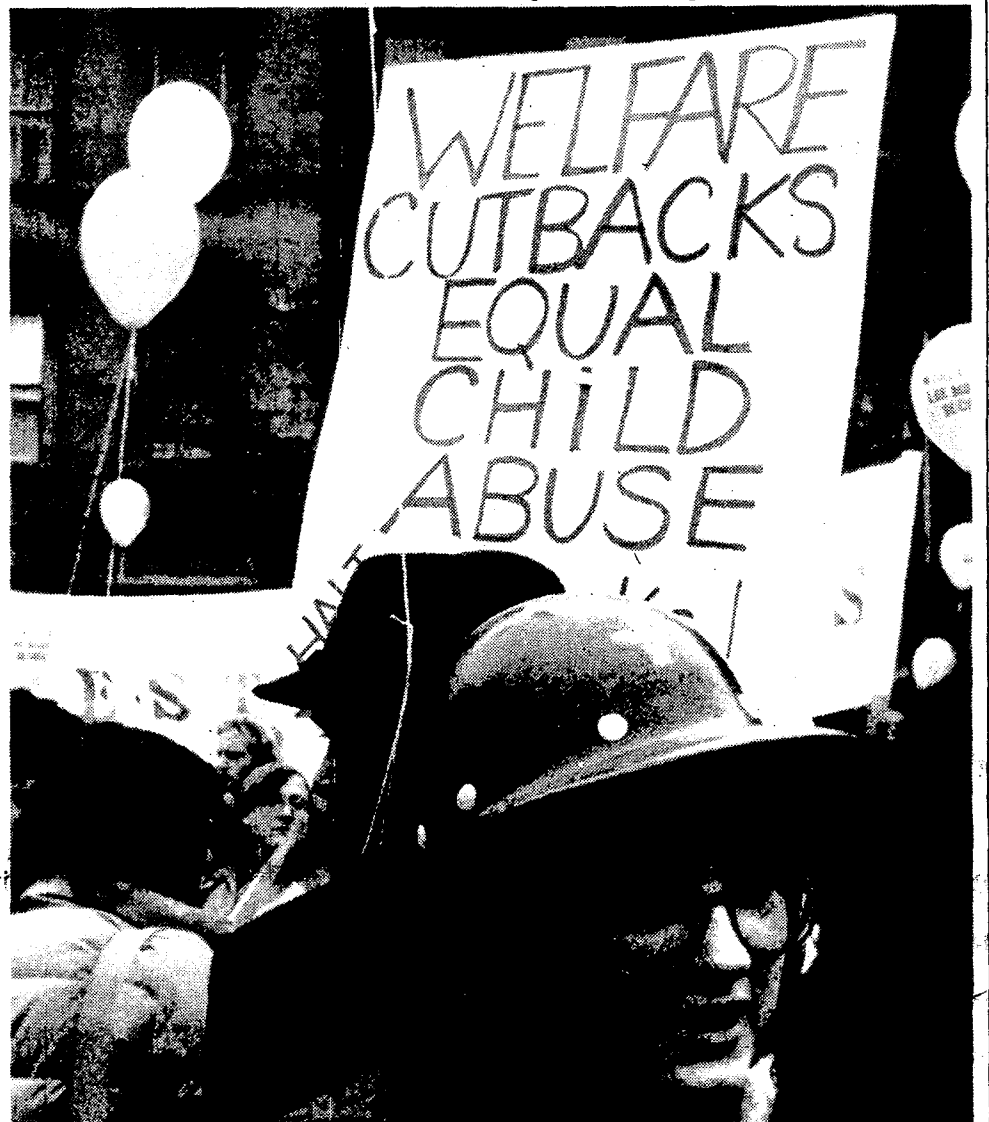
In short, we err if we join the debate in its present pro or anti government form. Instead, we need to re-forge the terms of discussion, so that the question becomes not government, but democracy, and the answer becomes a reconceptualization of the meaning and role of politics in our society.

How to effect such a change is a large and complicated question, and I can only suggest some elements of a response here. Abstract calls for greater democracy—given the debasement of all political language in this time—will likely echo across a vast emptiness. Rather, we need a deliberate effort to engage in activity that can concretely pose as a goal the rebuilding of democracy.

First, we cannot simply sit out the current struggle that is taking place around federal programs. We don't need to defend the entire edifice of the federal bureaucracy in order to resist the attempts to decimate the food stamp program or to destroy the nation's passenger rail service. Opposition to these policies is widespread and we have both an opportunity and a responsibility to support those elements of governmental activity that were won through popular struggle and that represent an institutionalization of popu-

Finally, even as the Reagan administration busily works to demonstrate the bankruptcy of its vision, we have to begin to work to demonstrate the relevance of ours. We need to find concrete ways to give an alternative sense of what genuine political participation could mean. The best place to do this in the immediate future may be at the local level where government does not seem as completely removed or impersonal. Moreover, it is at this level that there are actual possibilities for those on the left to impact on the processes of government.

There have, of course, over the past decade, been a number of left politicians who have run for office and even been elected. The difference now is that the growing problems of our cities (and states) and the growing maturity of various progressive constituencies opens up a potential for new alliances that are not dependent on a particular personality or



Peggy McMahon

lar concerns.

Second, we need to continue to demonstrate the dangers of our nation's future that are posed by the exclusion of economic decisions from the political process. This cannot be done by simply emphasizing the virtues of government regulation, but rather by emphasizing the ravages of unbridled corporate power. In particular, the damage done to our cities—large and small—by the unrestricted movement of industry is beginning to raise fundamental questions about how investment decisions are made.

Third, activities, organizations and issues that bring people together more consciously to exercise control over the decisions that affect their lives are essential. Such movements can be, in effect, the cradles of democracy, giving people a sense of their ability to impact on larger events and to create their own structures.

Two things are essential in this regard. One, that the movement really be controlled and sparked by the people who are its base. The other, that the movement understand its relationship to other movements and to the larger society.

Looking beyond our own borders, the Polish workers' movement provides a vivid example of the willingness to tolerate a certain appearance of disarray in the interests of insuring a lively internal life. In addition, it demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the relationship of its activities to other sectors and issues.

Without suggesting that we are on the brink of any similarly dramatic social explosion, I do want to stress the importance of the contemporary movements—the labor movement, the community organizing movement, the women's movement, and others—as potential sparks in lighting a wider democratic ferment.

issue, but that consciously seek to develop a coordinated approach involving new programmatic directions and a new kind of relationship between elected officials and constituents.

Such alliances will have to be both willing and able actually to contest for power and to have specific goals that can be accomplished should they win. In addition, they will have to operate with the recognition of the constraints within which local governments function—declining tax bases, withdrawal of federal monies, deteriorating infrastructure—and develop approaches that can respond to this reality. In essence, we will need to seek to rekindle a sense of government as the collective articulation of the needs and aspirations of the citizenry. Where objective limits prevent it from meeting those needs, we must seek to make it the leading advocate of them.

All of this may sound unrealistic given the present arrangement of power. However, unless we begin to think concretely about new political strategies, we will remain locked within the terms of a debate that manages to obscure the real issues before us.

In the nineteenth century Walt Whitman wrote: "Democracy—it still sleeps, quite unawakened, a great word whose history remains unwritten, because that history has yet to be enacted."

That those words still have resonance for us today is not due to any lack of appreciation for the democratic impulses and rights that have been part of our heritage, but rather to the larger vision of democratic possibility that remains at the core of what is best in the American dream.

Roberta Lynch is a member of the New American Movement, a democratic socialist organization.

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PERSPECTIVES

Criminal code is up in the Senate again

By Bill Blum

THE UNITED STATES IS IN the grips of an unprecedented crime wave. Since 1960, the number of serious crimes committed annually has quadrupled.

In 1980, 23,000 people lost their lives in acts of criminal violence, compared with 9,000 20 years earlier. People are justifiably concerned and are calling for action.

In the coming weeks, the Senate will debate the crime bills. Its focus will be Senate Bill 1630, a 425-page act designed to reorganize the federal criminal code. S.1630 could determine national policy on crime control for decades to come. But passage of the bill will do nothing to reduce the crime rate.

This will not be the first time the Senate has considered an omnibus criminal code bill. Such bills have been introduced in every congressional session since 1973, including S.R. 1 of the 94th Congress, the Criminal Justice Reform Act of 1975.

Although S.1 and the omnibus bills introduced in 1977 and 1979 were all presented as anticrime legislation, they failed to win congressional approval. Thanks largely to the efforts of the ACLU and the National Committee Against Repressive Legislation (NCARL), the public and the press were alerted to the dangers these acts posed to civil liberties and individual rights.

S. 1630 is cut from the same cloth as its predecessors. "From the standpoint of the Bill of Rights, S. 1630 is an unmitigated disaster and must be stopped," contends Frank Wilkinson, NCARL's director emeritus and one of the country's foremost authorities on criminal code reform.

Wilkinson's opposition is easy to understand. S.1630 is laden with repugnant provisions, including the following:

- **Obstruction of Government Functions:** S.1630 establishes broad new offenses of "obstructing a government function by physical interference" or "disorderly conduct." Interference with any federal function, regardless of the function's importance or the nature of the disruption, could be proscribed. Individuals charged with these crimes need not even know the function disrupted was governmental. Quite plainly, these provisions seriously threaten First Amendment freedoms.

- **Conspiracy and Attempt:** Planning and discussing certain activities, such as demonstrations that obstruct government functions, could become crimes under an expanded definition of conspiracy and the new general attempt statute the bill creates.

- **Solicitation:** Under this entirely new federal offense, a person could be convicted of a felony for encouraging someone else to engage in conduct he or she erroneously believed was constitutionally protected.

- **Accomplice Liability:** Under current law, accomplices must share the criminal intent of the direct perpetrators of a crime. S.1630 would extend accomplice liability to persons who merely provide "assistance" to others who commit crimes.

- **Anti-Nuclear Activities:** S.1630 defines a new offense that targets anti-nuclear activists for special investigation and prosecution. Any property damage at a nuclear facility or other energy-production plant could become a felony, punishable by five years in prison. The inchoate crimes of conspiracy, solicitation and attempt would also apply to this offense.

- **Freedom of the Press:** Like S.1, the new bill threatens press freedom in a variety



Jeff Miller

S.1630 would have no effect on crime, but it would diminish our political freedoms.

of ways. The bill reenacts current laws under which reporters can be accused of "hindering law enforcement" for refusing to identify certain news sources. The bill also enlarges the power of federal courts to place reporters in criminal contempt for disobeying a court order.

- **Obscenity:** S.1630 cements into statutory law the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Miller v. California*, adopting the "contemporary community standards" test for obscenity. In addition, the new bill expands the law to cover non-commercial dissemination of "obscene" material.

- **Information Regarding Government Wrongdoing:** Public employees who blow the whistle on official corruption or wrongdoing and journalists who publish what the whistleblowers have to say could find themselves charged with the offense of "revealing private information submitted for a government purpose."

- **Anti-Labor Provisions:** S.1630 would repeal certain prohibitions contained in current law against the interstate transportation of strikebreakers. In addition, a smaller companion bill, S.613, threatens to apply the federal law on extortion to strikes involving incidental picket-line violence.

NCARL believes that Senate conservatives will attempt to add S.613 to the omnibus bill as an amendment during the floor debate.

- **Preventive Detention:** Today, people accused of federal crimes have a right to reasonable bail. Under S.1630 they won't. The new bill gives judges broad new discretion to deny bail and to jail persons accused of any crime while they await trial. Such preventive detention conflicts with the Eighth Amendment and undermines the most fundamental principles of Anglo-American jurisprudence: that a person is innocent until proven guilty.

- **Confessions:** The new bill incorporates presently inoperative federal statutes designed to override the *Miranda*

decision by rendering "voluntary" (i.e., non-coerced) confessions admissible, even if they are obtained without any warnings about the right against self-incrimination. Such action may encourage the Supreme Court, which has chipped away at the *Miranda* rule in recent years, to abandon it altogether.

- **Sentencing:** S.1630 would replace the present federal practice of indeterminate sentencing with a determinate system under which defendants would receive prison terms of fixed length. The new system would eliminate parole, severely limit earning "good time" (i.e., early release) credits and provide high maximum sentences for most felonies. In 1978 the House Criminal Justice Subcommittee estimated that such changes would result in a 63 percent to 93 percent increase in the federal prison population.

- **Government Appeals for Sentences:** Under existing law, the federal government can only appeal sentences in cases involving defendants classified as "dangerous special offenders." Under S.1630, it will be authorized to appeal virtually any sentence it deems too lenient.

There is little reason to believe that the punitive philosophy embodied in S.1630 will work. The U.S. already has the third largest per capita prison population in the world—after South Africa and the Soviet Union. Prison sentences in this country greatly exceed those prescribed in Western Europe. Yet the U.S. has the highest crime rate of any advanced industrialized nation.

Nonetheless, S.1630's prospects of enactment are strong. The bill was approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee in November and has strong bipartisan support in the upper chamber. Its principal sponsor is Judiciary Committee chairman Strom Thurmond and its backers include Massachusetts' Ted Kennedy. In addition, the Reagan administration has made the bill the centerpiece of its anticrime program. Speaking before the International Association of Police Chiefs in September, President Reagan blamed the nation's high crime rate on our soft criminal justice system, which he claimed was based on "utopian presumptions about human nature." He called for a "sweeping revision" of the federal criminal code to restore law and order.

Fortunately, the situation is different in the House of Representatives. In 1978, the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Criminal Justice rejected the omnibus approach to reform of the criminal laws. Instead, the subcommittee endorsed revision of the current law on a subject-by-subject basis. Although the subcommittee is currently considering two omnibus

bills of its own, NCARL remains hopeful that it will reaffirm its 1978 position. Should the House approve an omnibus bill, the recodification process would move to a joint House-Senate conference. In that event, most observers believe that S.1630 would be adopted essentially as is.

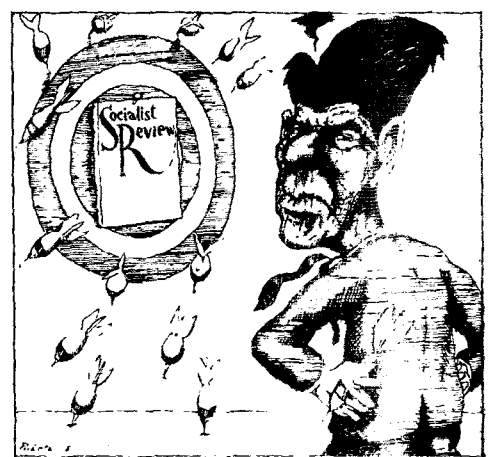
There is little doubt that the federal laws on crime are in drastic need of modernization. Passed piecemeal by various Congresses, those laws have never been systematic. Scattered throughout the 50 titles of the U.S. Code, the federal crime statutes are replete with inconsistencies, redundancies and ludicrous anachronisms. Existing law, for example, still prohibits interfering with the flight of government carrier pigeons, piracy in the service of a foreign prince and seducing a female passenger on a steamship.

The manifest need for code reorganization, however, by no means justifies the oppressive practices that S.1630 would sanctify. An effective approach to crime control must safeguard civil liberties and address the social sources of criminal violence. As U.S. Court of Appeals Justice David Bazelon notes, "The offenders that give city dwellers nightmares come from an underclass of brutal social and economic deprivation." Vernon Jordan has called this underclass "America's boat people without boats."

Among the helpful anticrime programs Congress could initiate are stringent controls on handguns, prison reforms emphasizing rehabilitation and segregation of nonviolent from violent offenders, and extensive financial grants to urban areas hardest hit by crime to promote neighborhood watch programs, victim restitution procedures, informal community justice centers and jobs.

Unfortunately, the Reagan administration and the Senate have rejected such ideas. In S.1630, they have offered us a penal code that would diminish our political freedoms without lowering the crime rate.

Bill Blum is a Los Angeles attorney specializing in criminal law.



Articles from recent and forthcoming issues

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John Reed



Real to Reel

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Dwelling on the revulsion
toward war (above, Diane
Keaton and Warren Beatty as

Louise Bryant and John Reed
interview despondent soldiers)
makes good historical sense.

Miscasting the revolutionaries

By Louis Menashe

Reds gave me the blahs. Perhaps it was the miscasting. I don't care how many Finnish tundras Diane Keaton is made to cross on skis: she will always be Annie Hall and not Louise Bryant. I kept expecting Woody Allen to one-line his way into each of the interminable number of encounter-squabbles between Reed and Bryant that take up so much time in a film that should have had more Epic than Esalen. Or perhaps it was some wrong details. There is a curious anachronistic slip when Radek, a Comintern leader, tells Reed there will be a congress at Baku for "Peoples of the Middle East"—it was, in fact, the First Congress of the Peoples of the East. Karl Radek was, incidentally, a puckish and garrulous figure, not the earnest and silent devotee of Zinoviev played by Jan Tryska.

Zinoviev, too, is entirely misplayed by the novelist Jerzy Kosinski. Zinoviev was by all accounts a repulsively shabby figure, flabby of appearance and flabby of moral fibre. Kosinski plays him as a ramrod made of steel, cold and peremptory, a Robespierre of the Russian Revolution. Actually Kosinski masterfully recreated *Trotsky*. There are a couple of glimpses of Lenin, made to conform to the voice-over description of him as the cerebral, inaccessible architect of the Bolshevik coup. Consequently, he appears with an *hauteur* suitable to someone of high academic rank. The real Lenin was an unprepossessing little guy with animated gestures and, as the revolutionary Victor Serge

put it, "a surpassing air of geniality and cheerful malice."

The Shining.

In the Petrograd crowd scenes the masses have an overly well-scrubbed look—are they Hollywood Russians or Spanish extras? Women wear kerchiefs on their heads with contemporary studied casualness and not with a tuck at the temples characteristic of women throughout Eastern Europe and Russia. For \$33.5 million, couldn't they have gotten that tuck down properly?

On the other hand, these are perhaps pedantic quibbles when measured against Warren Beatty's sincere reach—rare for Hollywood—for authenticity in conveying the general shape of issues and events within a historical drama, especially one as politically charged as the Russian Revolution and its aftermath. Russian workers and peasants wanted an end to the colossal slaughter on the battlefield; for this reason alone they would have followed the Bolsheviks unhesitatingly. To dwell on the revulsion toward war as the key issue in 1917 makes good historiographic as well as filmic sense. One of the best scenes in the film captures the transition from high spirits to stunned silence aboard the train carrying Reed and Bryant into Russia as they see the gore and truncated limbs of returning soldiers.

The flawed assumptions of the Comintern—that a political center in Moscow could decide what was best for communist parties in each country—and its dictatorial ways are effectively compressed in the film. So are the incipient problems of bureaucracy and egalitarianism. A some-

what cranky Emma Goldman (Maureen Stapleton) warns Reed of commissars' chains on popular energies, while Zinoviev, once seen dining on lemons and onions to fight off scurvy, now enjoys sumptuous meals in his railroad car. Was Reed disillusioned by all of this? It is still an open question, and that's the way Beatty tactfully handles it. In one scene Reed remonstrates with Emma Goldman, calling for more understanding of the dilemmas faced by the young revolution; in another, he lashes at Zinoviev for suppressing individuality.

Beatty's attention to some historical detail without oversimplification and bowdlerizing has enraptured the left. But we shouldn't be swept off our feet by large favors. Reed's was a wondrous life, and those were wondrous times, but the film

flattens the wonder out of both. Instead of passion we get a swarm of clichés—Reed burns the roast—that make *Reds* a formula film more or less about the problems of a modern marriage. In the background: the birth pains of Soviet Russia and American Communism.

Recommended reading: *Angelica Balabanoff, Impressions of Lenin*; Emma Goldman, *My Disillusionment in Russia*; Helmut Gruber, ed., *International Communism in the Era of Lenin*; Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power*; Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution*; John Reed, *Ten Days That Shook the World*. **Louis Menashe comments regularly on Soviet Affairs for In These Times. He is co-editor of El Salvador: Central America in the New Cold War (Grove Press).**

That tidy sacking of the Palace

By Pat Aufderheide

Sometimes the exigencies of bigtime filmmaking have as much to do with historical distortions as any directorial choices. Take, for example, the storming of the Winter Palace, a remarkably tidy affair in *Reds*. When asked in a *Film Comment* interview this month why the wrecking was so genteel, *Reds* production designer Richard Sylbert explained, "It's not our house. That was a find. It's a famous house, Lancaster House, where the man spent more money than anybody else has ever spent on a house in England, and he broke everybody doing it.... When he died, the crown took it over because nobody could afford it, and used it for dignitaries. We didn't even have to dress it."

"We got as close as possible to showing the destruction without hurting this place. We tried to do it by having people running around and throwing things in the air and all that. The Russians tore it apart; two people were killed. But the whole thing is a lie: 1,500 people did not charge into the palace; there were 400, and they went in the back. One guy drowned in the wine cellar. Some revolutionaries! The revolution took two minutes. They made it all up."

What about John Reed's role in the storming of the palace?

"The Russians invented that," Sylbert said. "He missed it. He was asleep. He got there in time to do what we showed. He stole a dagger and he felt very guilty about it later." ■

A missing intelligence

By Robert A. Rosenstone

Like many other people, I enjoyed *Reds* on that pop culture level where one does not take things too seriously. But all the while I knew that the Reed on screen bore but a tangential relationship to the man whose life I spent five years researching and writing. Missing are the drive, fire and high intelligence of the man who wrote *Ten Days That Shook the World* in two months (an amazing feat for any book, let alone a masterpiece). Reed on screen is not a thinking man, and you don't write books without thinking.

The film does manage to get the general outline of the last five years of Reed's life correct. Its problem lies less in factual errors (too many to chronicle here) than in interpretations, omissions, shadings. To begin with, it misconceived Reed by

putting a love story at the center of his life. That he had many affairs is true; that he loved Louise Bryant is also true. But in the most self-revealing document he ever wrote, an autobiographical sketch not meant for publication, Reed only mentions love and lovers—including Louise—as a kind of offhand afterthought in the last few sentences.

Rather than the human intimacy of love, Reed's major concerns from boyhood onward were with action, heroism, adventure and success in the world of strong men (he had been a sickly child). As an undergraduate at Harvard, then after 1911 as an aspiring writer, he was egocentric, ambitious and pushy. In the Bohemian subculture of Greenwich Village, Reed was a kind of hero, but one more admired than liked.

The central story of the adult man is that of the path from the Village to the grave before the

Kremlin Wall. It is a tale of how the desire to live fully and write truly ran up against the contradictions of his culture, then taught him that the contradictions were not his alone. It is the story of how a large ego was chastened by experience and tempered by a growing social conscience.

Reds ignores the important early steps on the path. In 1912, seeking an outlet for serious fiction, Reed came to *The Masses*, a joyous publication that voiced all the doctrines of the Village, the calls for revolution—nobody knew what the word meant—in politics, economics, sexual relationships and the arts. Here he learned about the struggles of the IWW at Lawrence (1912) and Paterson (1913) and found he had a flair for describing the drama of social conflict.

A trip to Mexico and three months with Pancho Villa's troops early in 1914 taught Reed

something about the long arm of capitalism (some Mexican copper mines were owned by Americans) and the joys of revolution. His reports from that land made him into a famous and highly-paid journalist. Then a jaunt to the western front later that same year convinced him that the socialist analysis was correct—the slaughter of the World War was due to commercial rivalries among the great powers.

Before this time, Reed's identification with causes, with Wobblies and Villistas, had been sporadic. The war turned him into an activist. By vigorously opposing the conflict he endangered his livelihood. In 1915 he was one of the highest-paid journalists in the U.S.; in 1917 nobody but radical publications would print what he wrote. The writer, he had learned, like the labor organizer in the factory, was easily expendable when his opinions disturbed editors, publishers or a government-induced national consensus.

If *Reds* smooths over the complexities of Reed's background, it also does not take him seriously enough as an artist. In retrospect he may seem a minor poet and

story writer, but in his day he won considerable acclaim in both forms. Certainly this background is what made *Insurgent Mexico* and *Ten Days That Shook the World* transcend the normal boundaries of reportage to become important, lasting and, yes, "great" pieces of revolutionary journalism.

When it comes to Reed's relationship to the Bolshevik revolution, the left wing splits in the U.S. and his problems with the Comintern in 1920, *Reds* captures the surface of issues well enough. More substance and less sound and fury might make the politics comprehensible, but that is obviously not the filmmaker's wish. Mood is what he is after and a mood of conflict is what we get.

Let us remember that this is a Hollywood film, after all. Given the typical products of the industry, we must acclaim Warren Beatty for the service he has done in bringing *Reds* to the screen. Reed has been altered in the process, but less than I—for one—originally feared. At least Beatty has revived this important figure for the general public, and also for a left that to judge by reviews that ignore historical references, had forgotten him as well.

Now it is time for those who care about the issues of his life to seek out the historic Reed, by reading works by and about one of the most interesting of our native radicals.

Recommended reading: *John Reed, Ten Days That Shook the World* (most easily understood by someone with a basic knowledge of Russian politics in 1917); *Insurgent Mexico* (much more

accessible for today's readers); *Adventures of a Young Man* (a good selection of stories and political writings); *The Education of John Reed* (a similar, more extensive, collection). Another good biography of Reed is Granville Hicks' *John Reed* (1936). For the left in the period, see James Weinstein, *The Decline of Socialism in America*, Daniel Aaron, *Writers on the Left*, Irv-

ing Howe and Louis Coser, *The American Communist Party*, Theodore Draper, *The Roots of American Communism*, Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All*, William L. O'Neill, *Echoes of Revolt: The Masses, 1911-1917*. Robert A. Rosenstone is the author of *Romantic Revolutionary: A Biography of John Reed*, and a consultant for the movie *Reds*.

Feminism first in the Village

By June Sochen

The rich intellectuality of Greenwich Village, the frequent debates about socialism and representative democracy and the serious divisions that emerged during the war are effectively depicted in *Reds*. Before the war began in 1914, however, feminism was a much livelier issue than socialism. Max Eastman, portrayed by Edward Herrmann in the film, was a feminist who joined his sister, lawyer Crystal Eastman, in demonstrations for women's suffrage and birth control. His magazine, *The Masses*, discussed feminist themes in most issues. Emma Goldman, played by Maureen Stapleton (poorly, I think), popularized the birth control issue before Margaret Sanger became associated with the cause.

The prewar Village was a closely knit community, removed from the rest of Manhattan ideologically and physically. Self-styled intellectuals lived in cooperative apartments, discussed art as well as politics, and considered the liberation of women an essential part of the human liberation movement to which the Villagers were dedicated. Indeed, many Villagers considered the women's suffrage movement and more generally, the feminist movement, the most important reform need of the 20th century. Many Villagers were socialists and feminists. They saw the coming socialist state as one in which women were treated equally with men.

Both sexes would be allowed to develop themselves according to their particular predilections. So women who wanted to raise their children would receive motherhood endowments from the state. This idea, proposed by Crystal Eastman, was coupled with her proposal for a uniform marriage and divorce law in the U.S., effective birth control methods available to all women and humane working conditions for both sexes with trade unions being recognized by industry. Another Village feminist, Henrietta Rodman, adopted the ideas of feminist theorist Charlotte Perkins Gilman and proposed the building of a feminist apartment house in which the basement kitchen, staffed by professionals, would serve all of the individual apartments in the building. A Montessori styled nursery on the roof would take care of pre-schoolers for mothers who worked outside of the home. The Greenwich Village feminists spent a great deal of time thinking about how to create the socialist-feminist utopia in which child raising patterns would be non-sexist (a 1970s term), discrimination would be eliminated in all areas and neither sex would be labelled according to predetermined notions.

Emma Goldman, "Red Emma" to her critics of the day, observed as well as participated in various Village causes. She wrote occasionally for Max Eastman's magazine but most of her writing was published in her own journal, *Mother Earth*. Goldman, ever the anarchic individ-



Max Eastman, Reed's friend and editor at *THE MASSES*



Emma Goldman on her way to Ellis Island for deportation

ualist, criticized the women's movement for imitating the male middle class culture. She argued that woman's suffrage in particular wanted the vote in a country that did not represent all people and in which voting lulled everyone into believing that they had real power in making political decisions. Goldman was against all formal organizations; to her, government, the church, school and the nuclear family all denied individual development and expression. The anarchist goal, which she articulated in her many lectures around the country, sought a free society in which human beings followed their own dictates. In her scheme, the human essence was always good and an anarchist society was one in which individuals would join together with others for the common good.

In *Reds*, Emma is seen in Russia during the Revolution and she appears willing to wait before assessing the success or failure of Lenin's efforts. In reality, Emma exiled by the U.S. government through a trumped up case manufactured by attorney general A.

fragments. Pacifist activists like Crystal Eastman organized peace groups while Rose Pastor Stokes argued, at least at the beginning of the war, that the U.S. should intervene on the side of the Allies. Writers like Susan Glaspell remained neutral, thereby infuriating all of the activists. Emma Goldman went to jail for her anti-war speeches.

Reds captures the excitement of the pre-war Village, the activism of its inhabitants, and the optimism that still pervaded American thought. Reed's romantic progressivism has appeal to the contemporary generation as well. The issues raised in the pre-war Village: feminism, socialism and pacifism are still vitally relevant and unsolved "isms" of the 1980s.

Recommended reading: *John Reed, Ten Days That Shook the World*; *Emma Goldman, Living My Life*; *William O'Neill, Max Eastman*.

June Sochen, author of *The New Woman: Feminism in Greenwich Village 1910-1920*, teaches history at Northeastern Illinois University.



Reed's World War I reporting (above, Reed in 1915) convinced him that a socialist analysis was correct.

Real to Reel



Muscovites honoring Bolshevik leaders in Moscow at about the time the Reds were reunited.

Exclusive News Agency/So. Short A Time

Another witness heard from

By Lester Rodney

What do old American reds make of Warren Beatty's movie? As an American red and a journalist, I find it mind boggling that a movie about the communist John Reed and the Russian revolution is casually playing at the main movie houses in the U.S. of A., 1982. The fact that a young moviegoer would probably respond to that with a shrug and "What's the deal?" is just the point. Here we are well into the Reagan-Haig era. The Russkies are once again the total devils of John Foster Dulles' time.

Vietnam superhawk Rostow is again high in the Washington saddle. They're even reviving the old air raid shelters. Carter's mad Brzezinski is starting to look almost statesmanlike in retrospect. And America yawns and says, "What's playing at the movies tonight? I hear *Reds* is pretty good."

Whether or not they are just going to see a good dramatic love story with two popular stars, the fact remains that they are hardly thrown into panic by its Russian Revolution, American Communist framework. (They don't seem strenuously to object to having their futures

mortgaged to the Pentagon either, but that's another story, a little more complicated one.)

Apart from this phenomenon, and the personal wonderment at filing into Del Amo Theater One and seeing my old *Daily Worker* colleague Art Shields on screen offering his thoughts on John Reed to the popcorn-gobbling high schoolers, collegians, aerospace engineers, grease monkeys, clerks and money managers of Torrance, Calif., what about the picture itself?

Mainly, I agree with *In These Times'* review. *Reds* is a good piece of movie-making. My one strong criticism is that the film

doesn't really show why John Reed became a red. Aside from some vague World War I pacifism, there is little clue to the nobility and grandeur of the ideas that motivated the revolution that shook the world. I'd have liked the Torrance audience to learn that this was nothing less than the first heroic attempt to supplant the profit motive with a truly social system.

Maybe that's too much to expect in popular commercial art. I don't know for sure. I remember a Wolper TV documentary on the American communists. Some documentary. It only forgot to include what made communists become communists. For all its viewers could tell, we might have gotten up one morning, stretched, scratched and said, "I think today I'll turn against my own country and become an ungrateful, despised, infiltrating Russia-lover, getting the FBI on my ass, probably losing my job, maybe winding up in the clink..."

After all, even a mystery buff wants to know about motive. It would be nice someday to see a movie or TV documentary about reds that showed what made them reds. Oh, it could get in its licks at the communists, showing that the Russia that drew John Reed later made an unholy mess of most of its original ideals and that some of us over here parked our own brains and took an awful long time to divest ourselves of the idiot notion that because a country was the first to call itself socialist it could do no wrong.

But it would also show that the most wrong-headed reds were much more right than wrong about the crying need in our country for a more sensible and humane way to run things than the monopoly capitalist way that puts profits over people every time, spawns depressions, wars, racism, urban decay, pollution and the corruption of the human

spirit. Not to mention the growing probability of the big thermonuclear bang.

My friend Frank, a red of a different organizational background and vintage from myself, also saw *Reds* and confessed to me on the tennis court: "I cried when they sang the Internationale." Pity we can't run all those singing extras under Brezhnev's window to remind him of what it was once all about. While we have them under contract, run 'em under the White House windows too, singing some choice words from Thomas Jefferson, like, "This country with its institutions belongs to the people who inhabit it..."

So, to sum up, as we old reds



Young journalist John Reed (in 1916)

were wont to say, any old or young red can cheer this movie as a startling Hollywood achievement, while not being mesmerized into seeing it as full fleshed history. *Anything* is good that calls into question the police lie that Americans who advocate something better than capitalism are foreign agents. That lousy lie has done and still does big harm to this land.

Play it again, Warren. What to do for an encore? How about that eminent actor Ronnie Baby in *Whites*?

Books that made this red a red: John Strachey, *The Coming Struggle for Power* and his later *The Theory and Practice of Socialism*; Beatrice and Sidney Webb, *Soviet Communism—A New Civilization?*; Friedrich Engels, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific* and *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*.

Lester Rodney is the ex-sports editor of *The Daily Worker*.



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Louise Bryant— a Sister Carrie of the Bohemians

By Alan Cheuse

Although she often shared the spotlight with John Reed and was, as *Reds* makes clear, a partner in Reed's later projects, Louise Bryant (she dropped the name of her adoring Portland dentist husband and never took Reed's name after their marriage) remains in several important ways the least well-known of all the historical figures who cavort across the screen in Warren Beatty's admirable American epic.

The record of her birth was lost in the San Francisco earthquake. The facts about her death in Paris in January 1936 remain clouded in a haze of alcohol and self-neglect. And many of the events that come between raise more questions than anyone can answer.

Her family life: daughter of a railroad man who moved his brood to Nevada and then abandoned them, she eventually made her way west again and achieved what was for her time a surprising number of years of education, eventually attending the University of Oregon. Her marriage to the dentist Trullinger: this was an inversion of the typical neo-Victorian arrangement. Under the cloak of respectability, she could fondle the secret drugs of poetry and intellectual endeavor. When Reed showed up in Portland, she boarded him as if he were the Union Pacific special heading east. If she had had even the vaguest

notion when they met just how far east he would take her, she would have cheered all the more.

Portland was kindergarten in her school of experience. In one giant step Reed promoted her to bohemian New York; where she slid—sleazed might be the proper neologism—into an affair with Eugene O'Neill while Jack was bedded in Baltimore after the removal of his ailing kidney. "Jack and Eugene" was not as light-hearted an adventure or as principled a foray into sexual freedom as the *Jules and Jim* mist that *Reds* gives it suggests.

Then came field work in human cruelty in the battle zones of Europe, where she fled to prove herself as much as to Reed and any other that she was a journalist in her own right—and then confrontation with American repression. Political repression, since the only brave thing we are sure about is that Bryant cast aside the veil of sexual repression when she left Oregon behind.

The Russian revolution brought her first-hand knowledge of historical transformation but after Reed's death her own life, moved and shaken by great events, fell back into a mere trembling of the spirit she could not control. She married mainline Philadelphia socialite William Bullitt, whom she and Reed had known when he was serving as a U.S. official in Moscow during the revolution, and then later in Washington. After the birth of her daughter,



Louise Bryant, (here, in 1918 on her return from Russia) lost a sense of purpose after Reed's death.

more mystery—the sealed divorce proceedings in the Philadelphia court before her child was old enough to ride a bicycle. Bullitt took custody of the child. After a period in which she clearly could not achieve on her own what seemed so easy to grasp when Reed was alive—a piercing sense of life and the style in which to convey it—she returned to Europe, to a France in the thrall of ignorant, clashing factions and finally to a sudden, solitary, sodden death in a cheap Paris hotel.

Her beginning and end thus remain shrouded in blankness. In this respect she would remind us of any number of women we know, women we've loved, wronged, married, divorced; women we once were but never, not ever, wish to become again. And so despite the missing documents, the sealed indictments, the eminently forgettable books



Eugene O'Neill's love affair with Bryant ended bitterly.

she wrote, the unwritten manuscripts, we know this person well—this Sister Carrie of the bohemian communists, our double, our pathetic friend.

Recommended reading: *Granville Hicks, John Reed, Barbara Gelb, So Short a Time, Robert A. Rosenstone, Romantic Revolutionary.*

Alan Cheuse is the author of *Candice and Other Stories*. His novel, *The Bohemians: John Reed and His Friends Who Shook the World* (Applewood), will be published later this month.

John Reed, well read

**Romantic Revolutionary:
A Biography of John Reed**
By Robert A. Rosenstone
Vintage Books, 389 pp., \$6.95

By McKinley C. Olson

Yes, I guess John Reed was a romantic revolutionary. But for all that, no less a realist than most of the other characters we're introduced to in the pages of this extremely fine and illuminating book. And what a cast! Among them Walter Lippmann, dating back to their days together at college, Lincoln Steffens, Max Eastman, Floyd Dell, Harriet Monroe, Big Bill Haywood and the Wobblies—the Industrial Workers of the World, Pancho Villa, Teddy Roosevelt, William Jennings Bryan, Woodrow Wilson, Eugene Debs, Upton Sinclair, Margaret Sanger, the birth control advocate, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Eugene O'Neill and the birth of the Provincetown Players, Sherwood Anderson, Emma Goldman, Kerensky, Trotsky and Lenin, and the two tempestuous, passionate women in his life—Mabel Dodge, the wealthy patroness, and Louise Bryant.

Born in Portland, Ore., in the late 1880s, into a well-to-do clan that later fell on hard times, John Reed was a dreamy boy, a reader who, at an early age, was guided by a sense that his destiny was as a writer.

From Oregon, with its abundant wilderness and still something of a frontier, Reed went to

an Eastern prep school, where he displayed a fierce desire, one that remained with him throughout his short and colorful life, to be noticed and to excel. In prep school it was athletics and writing. At Harvard, it was writing, clubs, magazines, organizations, friendships, artistic and intellectual ferment—even cheerleading. Anything, perhaps, to grandstand, to be with the action—to communicate his zest for life. At the same time, Reed was also introspective, sensitive and possessed of a growing awareness of the inequities and injustices.

Called a golden boy by Lincoln Steffens, a guide and mentor, the tall and handsome Reed decided before graduating from Harvard upon journalism—as a prelude to his desire to grow as a poet, short-story writer, playwright and, eventually, a novelist.

From Harvard, Reed went to Manhattan to pursue a writer's life. Already acutely aware of how the press, government and business worked together in behalf of privilege, Reed's social conscience really began to blossom as a reporter while covering a bloody strike of silk workers in New Jersey (and later, striking mine workers in Colorado); burst into flame as a war correspondent when he rode with Pancho Villa during the Mexican Revolution. As a correspondent, Reed also covered World War I, on both the western and eastern fronts, which provided him with the material for his second book,

War in Eastern Europe, and finally took him to Russia, where he immortalized the Revolution with *Ten Days That Shook the World*.

Reed loved Russia, and the Russians loved him. Calling "the crowd...the real hero of the Russian Revolution," Reed wrote that "Russian ideas are the most exhilarating, Russian thought the freest, Russians are the most exuberant; Russian food and drink are to me the best, and the Russians themselves are, perhaps the most interesting human beings that exist."

Of Reed and his book, Rosenstone, whose prose throughout *Romantic Revolutionary* is clear, thoughtful and even-handed, says, "Because he [John Reed] shared the commitment and visions of the participants (of the Russian Revolution), he was able to capture the emotions that people pour into waking dreams. Inaccurate in details, biased in point of view, *Ten Days That*



The real Lenin was not as coldly imposing as *Reds* shows him.

Shook the World conveys the kind of truth that is beyond fact, that creates fact. More than history, it is poetry, the poetry of revolution."

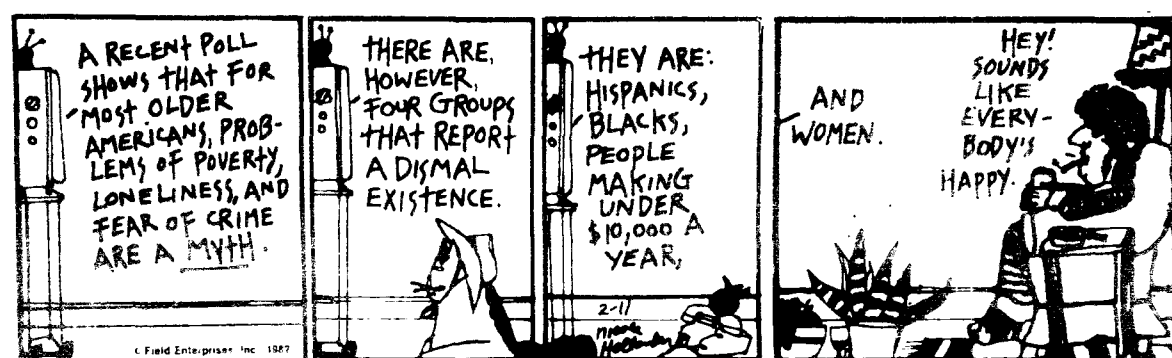
"You certainly can see, and you certainly can write," Lincoln Steffens told John Reed.

And that's just what Reed did with his life.

McKinley C. Olson, the author of *J.W. Gitt's Sweet Land of Liberty and Unacceptable Risk: The Nuclear Power Controversy*, is a Chicago-based writer and photographer.

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



Haitians

Continued from page 13

Elisnord and Petit-Frere have been in Ray Brook Prison since August. In small boats, they had managed to cross the 700 miles of temperamental Caribbean currents and land on the beaches of southern Florida. Too weak to be able to merge in to the landscape and make their way to Miami's Little Haiti, they were caught and interned at the Krome Avenue Detention Camp in Miami. Two weeks later they were transferred—under allegedly false pretenses—to Ray Brook.

"Many of us have family in the Miami area," explained Elisnord, a reserved but intense schoolteacher and father of four. "We were hoping that, like the Cuban refugees, we would be released to their care. But after two weeks at Krome, a Haitian who works for the INS came to us with a photograph of a factory in Brooklyn. He said, 'This business needs workers. We're going to fly you all up there.' When we arrived, we found we were in prison. In thinking of our families these things are very cruel."

Journeys into the night.

Elisnord was eager for a chance to tell his story. "I taught school in Grand Goave for 10 years," he said. "At the end of that time my health was failing and my wife and four children were often in need, so I joined the Force Armee d'Haiti [the national police force] for two-and-a-half years at a salary of \$55 a month. Then I returned to Jacmel to teach. I began to talk with the people. I could see that they were dying, both from lack of food and from hopelessness, and the Tontons Macoute [Duvalier's secret police] were like vultures living off their misery. I would listen to Radio Haiti Inter with friends, and discuss what they reported. It gave the truth. You must

know that of all the money that foreigners send us, none gets to the people.

"When there are people with problems with the government, they find a way to communicate and to gather together to build a boat. When we finally left there were 64 of us in this sailboat. We had a map and compass. We were a cooperative; no one made money off our trip. It took us seven days. We were caught when we landed and sent to Krome and then here."

Sitting next to Elisnord, Petit-Frere spoke up. "I am a mason. A Tonton Macoute asked me to build a house for him which I did. He then refused to pay me and made me stay five days in prison at Fort Dimanche. No food. No bed. Then, in front of the judge, he said, if you don't want to stay for five months in prison, you must give up your request for money. So I did. Another Tonton Macoute came to me and asked me to build him a house. I said no, I won't build for 'chiefs' because they are robbers. Incensed, the second Tonton went to the Commandante and obtained three men to arrest me."

Noting my surprise at this treatment, he added, "If a Tonton kills someone he receives no punishment. All men of Haiti are slaves of Duvalier now."

He continued: "A friend told me what was about to happen and I hid. This was April 1981. The four Tontons came to my house and 'persecuted' my wife, who was pregnant, so that she had to leave home, too. I left for a coastal town in the north. I lived in the forest with my cousin for one month. No one helped us. We ate mangos.

"In the evenings I went out and found a relative whose wife was organizing a boat. I helped work on it for a month at night, with others. Finally we left—196 on board. So crowded we could not sit down for 17 days. No compass or map. It took us 17 days. We arrived the 4th of July and were sent to Krome detention camp in Florida for 15 days before being brought here."

back and because of the restraining order they couldn't get a lawyer and we couldn't send them back.

Why aren't lawyers allowed on the cutter that is intercepting the Haitian boat people?

That's not our decision. It's the Coast Guard's. We are on board only to address the immigration aspect.

The U.S. refugee quota for Vietnam for 1981-82 is 144,000. If this is so, why are we giving 3,200 Haitians such a hard time?

The Vietnamese are coming in as war refugees. We have this for Iron Curtain or war-torn countries. It's not precisely a quota....The Haitians are coming for economic reasons. Those who qualify for political asylum will be granted it. Of course, the burden of proof is on the applicant.

But isn't it hard for the applicant to write to a police officer in Haiti and ask him to sign an affidavit that admits that he tortured the applicant at some time in the past?

Again, we don't make the judgment. The State Dept. makes the decision....

Could American foreign policy effect some change in Haiti?

Baby Doc is more democratic than his predecessor. There are fewer executions. However, we can't impose our philosophy on other countries.

How can democratic values be implemented in American foreign policy?

I'm not sure that should be the criteria of our foreign policy. Foreign policy is in the hands of the people we elect. It serves the interests of the country as a whole to support certain dictators.

But what if the President violates the law as it seems he might be doing by denying civil rights to Haitians requesting asylum?

You vote him out in three years.

That's the only alternative? I'm not sure Americans knew they were voting for a foreign policy that seems to consist primarily of the use of force and the threat of the use of force....

You punch someone in the nose and they'll be more amenable. —R.L.

Catch-22 at prison in Lake Placid

Excerpted from Robin Lloyd's Jan. 6 interview with INS official Michael Mosbacher:

Robin Lloyd: What are the Haitian detainees waiting for? What will get them out of prison?

Michael Mosbacher: Their cases have to be reviewed by the immigration judges who rule on whether they can be admitted to the U.S. Each case has to be looked at individually.

But they're not seeing any lawyers...

They are in some areas where we can find lawyers who will represent them. But it's not our job to provide lawyers.

Could you tell me what provoked the present crisis and caused Judge Stone in Florida to issue a temporary restraining order that prohibits the deportation of a group of Haitians until they are granted a hearing on their claims for asylum? Weren't they being sent back without being given due process?

He [the judge] thought they were....I am not directly involved in the exclusion processes.

By the Justice Department appealing this restraining order does it mean that Reagan and the INS are committed to not implementing due process?

That's not our intent....It's a non-judicial hearing....I think they're getting due process....

But it's a Catch-22 situation....

We're restrained by certain procedures. If they streamlined the procedures, things could move a lot quicker. But following it by the letter as per the restraining order, they'll be here a lot longer.

How do you distinguish between political and economic refugees?

That's decided by the Department of State. They give an advisory opinion to the Immigration judge, and then the judge rules. We have no intention of subjecting anyone to a life-threatening situation. We've had people who wanted to go

Desulme, who at age 24 is the youngest of the three Haitians, said he had only recently arrived at Ray Brook. "They beat me up at Krome," he said. "It was on Sept. 3. I was the spokesman for 1,120 men and women who didn't want to eat until they had some assurance of getting out. The conditions at Krome are horrible; mosquitos, bad water, no baths and bad food. Eighty percent of those people had family in Miami. So because I spoke out for them, I was beaten, and transferred to Otisville and then here."

He leaned forward. "I am a law student and have been active in opposition politics although some of my family are part of the ruling class. That's why I don't want you to take my picture."

"For me, it all started on July 23, 1963. Duvalier sent two deputies to our house. They shot and killed my mother. They wanted to get us four kids but an uncle rescued us. I grew up vowing to avenge my mother's death. Early in 1981 I took some political trips to Costa Rica. When I returned I was thrown in jail. I cannot talk about this experience. Twenty men to a cell. We were beaten. After a month and three days, my family paid off the officials and I got out."

"I left for Jamaica. Michael Manley [former Jamaican prime minister], who was a friend of my family's, said that our political party would be the official party in exile in Jamaica. After Manley lost the election I could not stay and I took a plane to Miami with a false passport. I refused to leave the airport until I could

see a lawyer." The lawyer kept him from being sent back to Jamaica, but could not keep him out of Krome.

"The people here are becoming crazy," Desulme continued. "I don't understand why the American government spends all the money it does to keep us in jail when they could liberate us to our families in the U.S. I have an uncle and a cousin here in business. I know the law. But it seems to me that human rights is a joke to Americans."

My visiting hour was drawing to a close. Desulme left the room before the others, carrying the flyers I had given him, but was quickly brought back by a guard.

"Did you give him these flyers?" the guard asked. When I nodded, I was informed I had violated prison rules.

"These have to be processed through proper channels," the guard said. Desulme hadn't been hiding them, so I figured it was a small matter. It wasn't. Lefebvre appeared and cut short my picture-taking. As I was leaving, the guards were preparing to strip-search the detainees before letting them return to their cells.

Elisnord, the gentle schoolteacher, would not accept these indignities. "You see how they treat us?" he shouted in broken English so that the guards would understand. "I don't have drugs. I don't have anything. Why is this happening to us? As Lefebvre hurried me out the door, my last image was of Elisnord ripping off his shirt: 'I have nothing—I am nothing....Please, tell people!'"

DIRECTORY

The Directory is published to facilitate contact with organizations frequently referred to in the pages of *In These Times*. Each organization has paid a fee for its listing.

Association for Workplace Democracy
1747 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20009

The Citizens Party of Illinois
109 N. Dearborn, Suite 603
Chicago, IL 60602
(312) 332-2066

The Citizens Party- National Office
1605 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20009

Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy
120 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, DC 20002

C.O.I.N.-Consumers Opposed to Inflation in the Necessities

2000 P Street, N.W.
Suite 413
Washington, DC 20036

DSOC-Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee
853 Broadway, Room 801
New York, NY 10003

Midwest Academy
600 West Fullerton Ave.
Chicago, IL 60614

National Center for Economic Alternatives
2000 P Street, N.W.
Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036

NAM-New American Movement
3244 N. Clark St.
Chicago, IL 60657

New Patriot Alliance
343 S. Dearborn, Room 305
Chicago, IL 60604

Socialist Party
1011 N. 3rd St., No. 201
Milwaukee, WI 53203

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for two insertions and \$10.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 40 words or less (additional words are 35¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Bill Rehm.

CHICAGO, IL

February 20.

There will be a fundraising party for *In These Times* at Organic Theater, 3319 North Clark, on Saturday at 8:30 p.m. Come see the world premier production of "E.R.," a real slice-of-life look at an emergency room on a busy night in a Chicago hospital. Stay afterwards for a discussion and a wine and cheese reception. Tickets are \$12.00. Send checks and reservations to Debbie Zucker, *In These Times*, 1509 North Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago IL 60622. (312) 489-4444.

February 18

Barbara Ehrenreich, leading feminist activist and author, and Judy Gardiner, teacher of women's studies and literature and founding member of the University of Illinois Women's Union, will discuss "Feminism and the Family: Perspectives on Personal Life" at Cross Currents, 3206 N. Wilton, 7:30 p.m., \$2 donation. A representative from the National Alliance of Black Feminists, Ron Sable from Lesbian and Gay Socialists, and Mark Podolner, father and child-care worker, will comment. Sponsored by the Second City Socialist School/New American Movement.

LOS ANGELES, CA

February 12-14

The Union for Radical Political Economics and the Westcoast Association of Marxist Historians are sponsoring "A Western Regional Conference." Two evening plenaries will focus on Reaganism's effects and the day-time work-

shops will encompass a broad range of historical, political economic investigations. The conference site is the Architecture and Urban Planning Building, UCLA. The first plenary begins at 7 p.m. For further information contact, URPE, Department of Economics, UC Riverside, Riverside, CA 92521.

NEW YORK, NY

February 13

Physicians for Social Responsibility/NYC will present a symposium "Preparing for Nuclear War: The Psychological Effects" at the Roosevelt Hotel, Madison Ave. and 45th St., from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with Studs Terkel, Richard Barnett, Robert Lifton, and others. For further information, call PSR/NYC, (212) 477-3416.

WASHINGTON, DC

March 5-7

Examine U.S. government responsibilities in facing contemporary challenges at the ADA/Roosevelt Centennial Conference. Speakers and panelists will address economic democracy, foreign and military policies, civil rights and liberties, politics and the "new federalism." Among those featured are Joseph Lash, Irving Howe, Eleanor Smeal, Lester Thurow, Ralph Nader, Dolores Huerta, Gerald McEntee, Paul Warnke, William Winpisinger, Carol Greenwald, Richard Hatcher and Henry Steele Commager. Registration: \$35. Contact: Americans for Democratic Action, 1411 K Street, NW, Suite 850, Washington, D.C. 20005. (202) 638-6447.

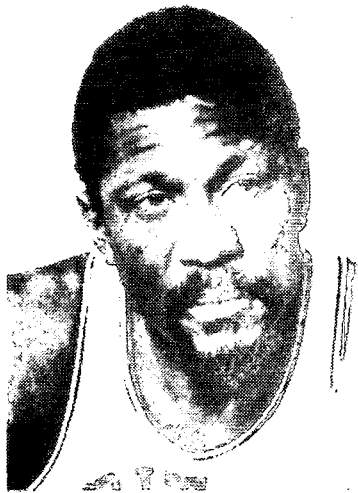
CUBA/NICARAGUA

March 15-30

Liberation Education and Liberation Theology Seminar March 15-March 30. Cost: \$1,400 includes flights linking Miami, Havana & Managua, meals, bi-lingual guides, visas, hotels. Contact Mark Kane, Institute for Global Education, 25 Sheldon, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49503, (616) 454-1642.

Sports

Continued from page 24
marginal white players? To determine whether they do, we divided the players on every team into two categories: the "starters," the five players who play the most minutes per game and the "reserves," the remaining six players on the team. Our findings indicate that—as predicted by those who claim that margin-



Bill Russell

al white players receive special treatment—white are indeed underrepresented among the starters and overrepresented among the reserves: 22.6 percent versus 31.2 percent. But this relationship is not a strong one; a pattern of this sort could have occurred by pure chance approximately one time in seven.

To further test the "marginal white player" hypothesis, we divided the reserves into two groups: those occupying positions six through eight, measured in minutes on the court, and those occupying positions nine through 11. If marginal white players were kept on simply as a bone to the fans, we reasoned, then they ought to be overrepresented toward the back of the bench. Our results, however, revealed that this was not the case; whereas 37.7 percent of the players in positions six to eight were white, only 24.6 percent of the players in positions nine to 11 were white.

The popular image of the rarely used white player sitting at the far end of the bench does nonetheless receive some support from our data. In those eight cities with a black population of

less than 10 percent—the very cities that would presumably be most subject to white fan pressure—the percentage of white players toward the back of the bench (positions nine to 11) was 37.5 percent compared with zero for the league's five blackest cities.

But the limitations of our study prevented us from looking at all the ways that race might affect decisions by NBA owners, general managers and coaches. We had no way of testing whether racial factors influence who gets into the NBA—if it is possible that talented black players

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are occasionally cut in favor of whites of lesser ability. Racial considerations could also enter into decisions about who gets to play, especially in games that are out of reach anyway. Our study may therefore underestimate the role of race in today's NBA.

Our findings, though hardly definitive, are more than sufficient to establish that the NBA is anything but colorblind. The league has progressed dramatically from the days in 1960 when the fine black guard of the St. Louis Hawks, Sihugo Green, found himself under orders to rebound and play defense, leaving the scoring—insofar as was possible—to the whites. But professional basketball is still a long way from meritocracy. And the economics of the box office suggest that the path to true color blindness may be a tortuous one indeed.

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Jerome Karabel is an associate of Harvard University's Department of Sociology and of the Huron Institute. David Karen is a doctoral candidate in Harvard University's Department of Sociology.

CULTURE SHOCK

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tapes of typical background noises, for people who want to phone in claiming they are in a business office, rail-

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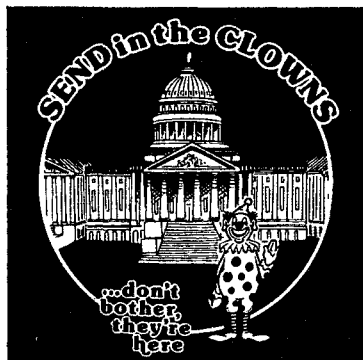
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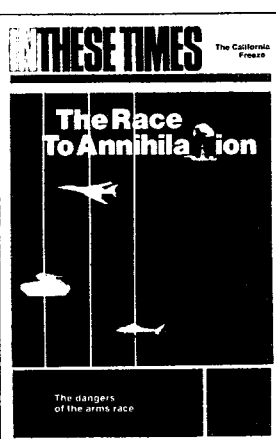
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COLOR on the COURT

By Jerome Karabel & David Karen

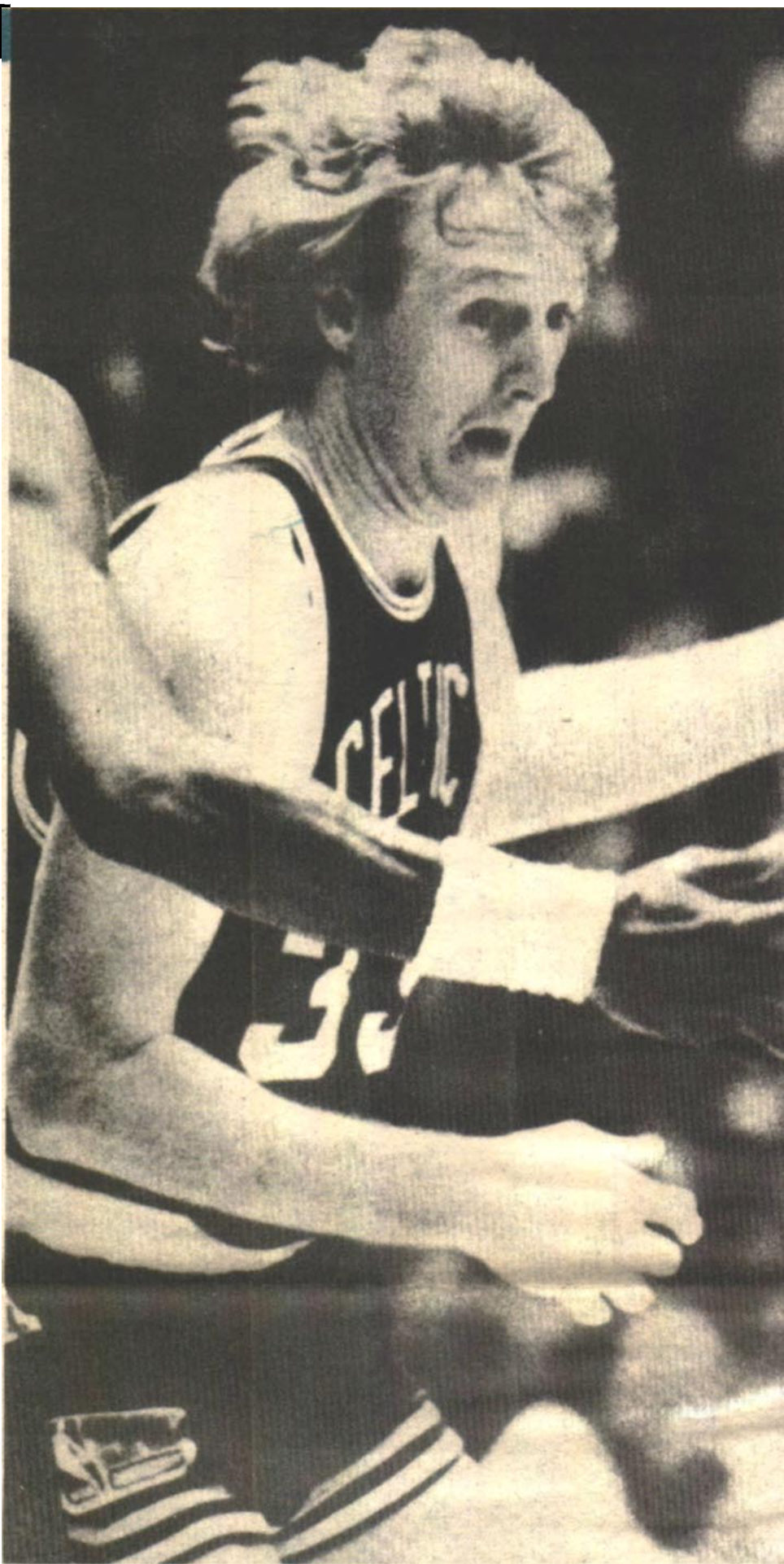
THE NATIONAL BASKETBALL Association was founded in 1949 as an all-white enclave—two years after Jackie Robinson broke the color line in major league baseball. Professional basketball has come a long way since then, with quality of performance on the court gradually casting aside considerations of skin color. In the 25 years between 1955 and 1980, the proportion of blacks in the league has gone from less than 10 percent to more than 70 percent.

Blacks now set the tone in the NBA; the slower, more deliberate game of the '50s has been replaced by a running and jumping brand of basketball exemplified not by the two-handed set shot but by the slam dunk. As recently as 1958, an all-white St. Louis Hawks team won the NBA; in today's NBA, however, a team can simply not succeed without drawing on the talents of black players.

Yet if the players are free of many of the racial prejudices that pervade American society, the fans most assuredly are not. And the owners, whatever their private feelings on racial matters, cannot afford to ignore this.

Ted Stepien, current owner of the Cleveland Cavaliers, addressed the issue of race with a crude bluntness shortly before he purchased the team: "This is not to sound prejudiced, but half the squad would be white. ...White people have to have white heroes. I myself can't equate to black heroes. I'll be truthful—I respect them, but I need white people. It's in me. And I think the Cavs have too many blacks, 10 of 11. You need a blend of black and white. I think that draws, and I think that's a better team."

While Stepien's personal views on race may be unusual among NBA owners, there may be a kernel of truth in what he is saying. Many white fans may, in fact, be unwilling to give their support to an overwhelmingly black team, as even a cursory glance at the current attendance figures for the Larry Bird-led Boston Celtics versus the figures for the Celtics during the '60s, when most of their important players—including the great Bill Russell—were black, would attest. And indeed, when asked about his remarks, Stepien declared that they were issued "in a context of marketing." (Perhaps by sheer coincidence, the overwhelmingly black Cavaliers team of 1979-1980 was



Does the fact that Larry Bird is white affect attendance for the Boston Celtics?

transformed, in the year after Stepien's purchase, to one composed of six whites and five blacks.)

Stealin'.

That race may be a consideration in professional basketball today is hardly news to black players. Indeed, according to David Halberstam's superb new book on the NBA, *The Breaks of the Game* (see *In These Times*, Feb. 3), there is a widespread feeling among black players that their jobs are less secure, especially those of bench players. Many teams, Halberstam contends, fill their lower bench positions with marginal white players as a means of pacifying the fans. Not surprisingly, black players resent this and, according to Halberstam, even have a name for it: "stealin'."

Anecdotes of teams allowing racial considerations to enter into personnel decisions abound. There was the time, for instance, that Joe Caldwell, averaging nearly 20 points a game, was sent to the bench by an Atlanta team desperate for a starting white.

But are these anecdotes simply isolated instances, or is there an underlying racial pattern in the NBA? To answer this question, we gathered data for the 1980-81 season for each of the NBA's 23 teams on the race of players; the racial composition of the team's geographical area; and (in order to determine which players spent the most time on the bench) the number of minutes logged by each player.

We first checked for a relationship between where white players were concentrated and the racial composition of the league's cities. If race remains a factor, then white players should be disproportionately concentrated on teams in the league's whitest cities. To test this, we divided the league's cities into three categories: less than 10 percent black, 10 to 20 percent black, and more than 20 percent black.

The results, shown in the accompanying table, reveal a clear pattern: the whiter the category of city, the higher the proportion of white players. The probability that this relationship could have occurred by sheer chance is less than 1 in 100. Ted Stepien, it seems, may not be alone in thinking that stocking a team with white players is a sound business practice.

Do fan-pressured NBA teams fill their benches, as Halberstam suggests, with

Continued on page 23

Racial Composition of Cities*

Less Than 10% Black:
Boston, Denver, Phoenix, Portland, San Antonio, San Diego, Seattle, Utah

From 10% to 20% Black:
Dallas, Golden State, Indiana, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Houston, New Jersey, Philadelphia

More Than 20% Black:
Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, New York, Washington

Total: League as a whole

Racial Composition of Teams

	Black	White	Total
Less Than 10% Black:	63.6%	36.4%	100% (88)
From 10% to 20% Black:	72.7%	27.3%	100% (110)
More Than 20% Black:	87.3%	12.7%	100% (53)
Total: League as a whole	72.7% (184)	27.3% (69)	100% (253)

- * City population figures based on 1980 Census Bureau data for the relevant Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area.
- Numbers in parentheses represent the actual number of players.